October 2013

Salt

The Art & Soul of Wilmington

Celia Rivenbark Comes Clean on Southern Manners

Remembering Hazel

A Walk Amongst the Stones

The Ghost and Mrs. Keiser

Our Market is Moving. . . Are you?

102 Seaside

1616 Dye Place

1320 Landfall Drive

1317 Regatta

8049 Reunion

1454 Quadrant Circle

111 Vistamar

1728 Pembroke Jones

2001 Spinnaker

1820 Pembroke Jones

2000 Spanish Wells

2000 Trimaran

168 Beach Road South

1064 Ocean Ridge

201 Krystal Pond

205 S. Channel

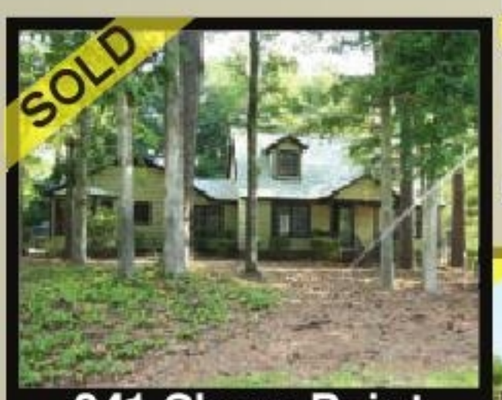
1937 Lunar

2009 Marsh Harbor

2017 Deer Island

812 White Road

529 Moss Tree

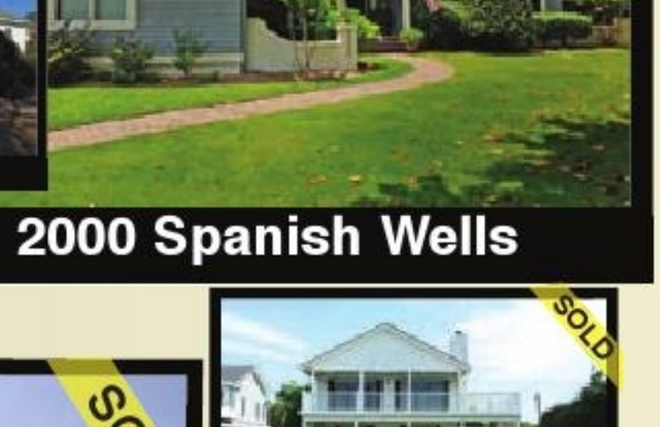


241 Shore Point

325 Aldrich Lane

513 Moss Tree

5625 Andrews Reach



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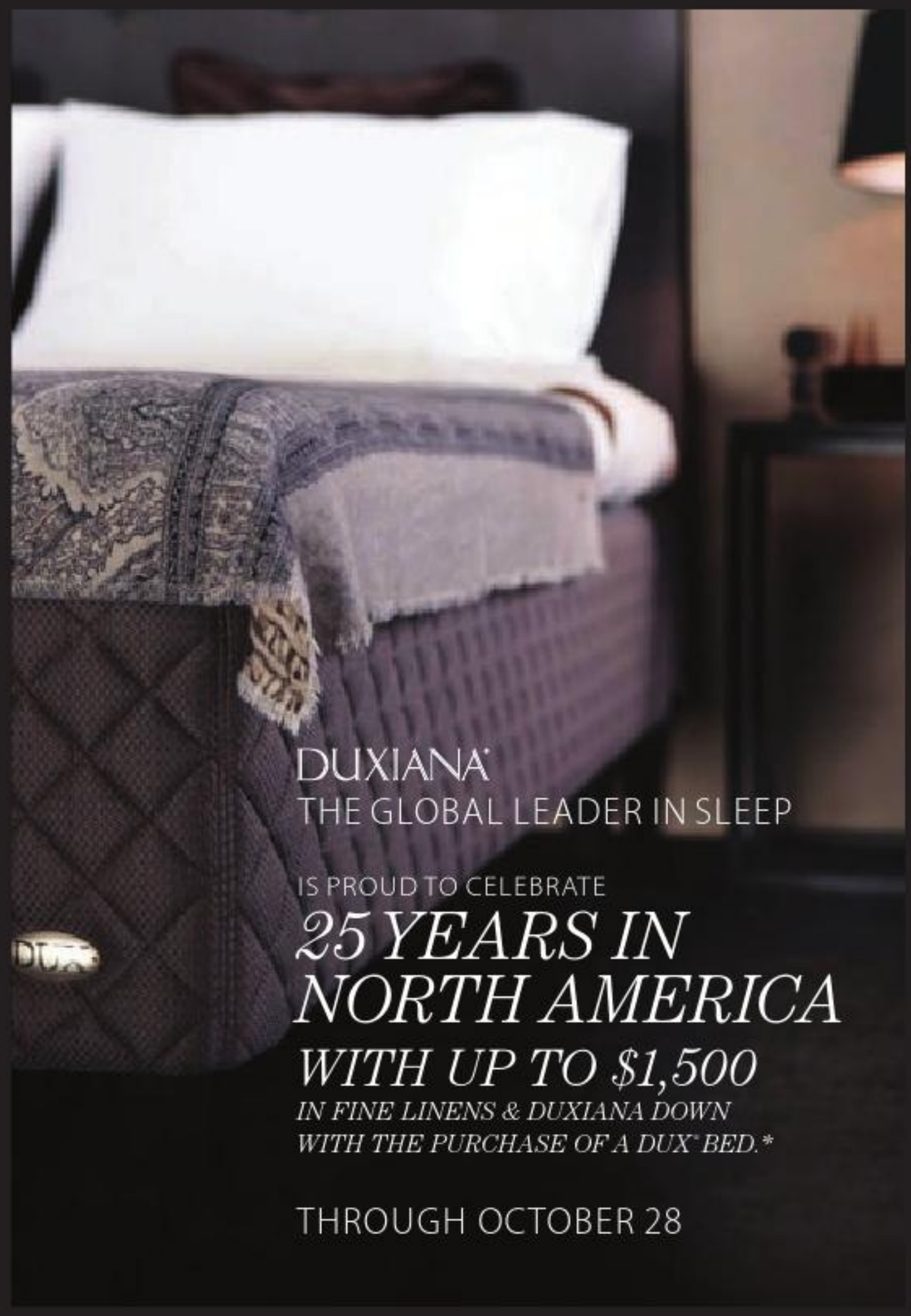
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on location at Le Catalan French Cafe & Wine Bar

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7000 West Creeks Edge

Cove Point. This lovely, spacious home offers an open flowing floor plan with a grand 2 story foyer, 10 foot ceilings throughout the first floor and chestnut floors in all formal areas. The chef's kitchen offers all top of the line stainless appliances, granite counters, and custom cherry cabinets, and 2 walk-in pantries. The first floor master suite includes a large bedroom, multiple walk-in closets, and an oversized bath. The second floor offers an open playroom, 3 large bedrooms, 2 big baths, a walk-in cedar closet, and a huge walk-in attic. The back yard is your own secluded private oasis with pool, spa, and terraced patios all surrounded by lush, mature palms. **$985,000**

7948 Sanderling Place

Marsh Oaks. This beautiful custom home has recently been renovated & updated. Gorgeous African Sapele hardwoods run throughout the 1st floor of the open floor plan. The vaulted great room is open to the kitchen which has all new stainless high-end appliances, granite counters, custom cherry cabinets, & open breakfast room. The master retreat offers a double sided fireplace, new master bath w/custom cut tiles, Jacuzzi, & separate tiled shower w/multiple heads. The FROG boasts caribbean heart of pine floors, trim work, & bookcases & cabinets. Over 1 acre of meticulously designed landscaping offers tranquil stone pond w/waterfall, multiple slate & flagstone terraces & walkways, and custom stacked stone fireplace, make this yard the ideal spot for entertaining or just relaxing. **$649,000**

1802 Hawthorne Road

South Oleander. Immaculately maintained home located in the sought after neighborhood of South Oleander. This low maintenance home, with all systems/features updated offers a large master down, 3 beds plus office/bonus space upstairs. It boasts hardwood floors throughout both levels, formal living room and dining room and a spacious wood paneled den with fireplace and sunroom which overlooks a lush and meticulously cared for yard. **$424,900**

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The Circuit Rider

By Jim Dodson

My great-great-grandfather was a circuit-riding Methodist preacher and land surveyor from Mebane who reportedly help establish the modern boundaries of several central North Carolina counties and founded several rural parishes from eastern North Carolina to the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains sometime after the Civil War.

I've never seen a picture of George Washington Tate but I feel like I know the man because he figures so prominently in family stories — and places — I knew growing up. Something of a rural polymath, according to family lore he also ran a successful gristmill on the Haw and supposedly cast the bell that hangs — or used to — in Hillsborough's historic courthouse. Our family tree is littered with members who bear parts of his name, and I can show you the spot on the Haw River beside I-40 where his gristmill stood until a couple of decades ago.

He was the father of four sons, and his lone daughter, Emma — my father's grandmother — was said to have been an orphaned Cherokee infant when Tate brought her home from one of his Western circuit rides. She grew up to marry a rural fiddle-playing dandy named Jimmy Dodson, a wily horse trader who supposedly sold horses to the occupying Yankees by day and stole them back at night. Whether this is true is anyone's guess. What is true is that Aunt Emma, as his Indian bride was called among neighbors along rural Buckhorn Road in Orange County, was a healer beloved for her earth wisdom and deep knowledge of natural medicine gathered from the wild.

My father's happiest boyhood days, he long maintained, were the Indian summer days spent on his grandmother's farm between Chapel Hill and Hillsborough, leading horses from one pasture to another for Uncle Jimmy and tagging along with Aunt Emma on her herb-gathering walks through the fields and woods around the family home place. When my older brother and I were old enough to handle shotguns, an annual pilgrimage to the family home place around Thanksgiving to shoot mistletoe out of the huge white oaks that grew there became part of our pre-holiday routine, an annual event for years.

The home place was still intact in those days but long abandoned, a ghostly ruin silvered by time, with a front porch sagging into a sea of nettled weeds and Virginia creeper, its stone chimney crumbling.

As I recall, we never actually set foot inside the house. Visiting was like coming upon an abandoned church. We solemnly peeked through the shuttered windows and listened to our father's memories of being a boy there. It was sacred family ground, but nature had reclaimed it for birds and spiders and snakes and other living creatures.

Funny how blood and landscape shape our lives.

Beyond this crumbling piece of our past, my primary connection to the family patriarch remains to this day a well-known street in Greensboro where I once rode my bike to go to the movies, a relatively short thoroughfare that bordered the busy UNCG campus with coffee houses and restaurants and a collegial air of commerce.

It was on Tate Street where I saw my first peace protest around 1966 and smelled what seemed to be a Turkish carpet burning. It's where I heard a pretty young UNCG nursing student named Emmylou Harris perform one night at a local café, and a few years later took pretty Ginny Silkworth from my ninth grade Sunday school class to the Cinema Theater to see Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*, a first date for us both. I remember spilling a Coke on our laps.

Time may have swept away the family home place on Buckhorn Road — an upscale development of houses resides under those whites oaks now — but I think about our original family circuit rider sometimes when I'm making my own ride from the coast to the foothills, triangulating between Greensboro and Wilmington and Southern Pines, taking backcountry roads whenever possible.

The three sister magazines I helped create and serve as editor [*PineStraw*, *O.Henry* and *Salt*] keep me on the run most weeks, riding and thinking, plotting and planning, just as my preacherman ancestor might have done in his time, in my case made all the more meaningful because all three places hold substantial pieces of my family history and heart.

Wilmington is where I started school, learned to swim and ride a bicycle, experienced my first hurricane, caught my first fish, had my first teenage summer crush, and spent many of my early summers of life on the beach at Wrightsville and Carolina Beach. Its beautiful old downtown and historic brick streets grabbed hold of my heart early and have never let go. Walking into St. Paul's Lutheran Church and sitting in the choir loft like I did one warm afternoon not long ago was like stepping back into my happy early boyhood — a version, if you will, of my father's love of Aunt Emma's sacred fields back in Orange County.

Greensboro, on the other hand, is where I came of age and stood with my brother and father to witness the historic sit-down demonstration at the Woolworths one gray winter day in 1960, and soon went through confirmation with Ginny Silkworth and rode my bike all over town, played little league baseball and football for the Elks Club, mowed lawns for spending money, grew to be golf crazy, and became an Eagle Scout at a Quaker meetinghouse at Guilford College. It's where I learned to play the guitar and became a summer intern at the newspaper where my dad had begun his career; where I fell in love with two different girls and made my closest friends and eventually left home and family and a great old dog named Hoss for college and a writing career that took me away to Atlanta and eventually northern New England.

Pinehurst and Southern Pines — The Pines, as I like to say — is where my father took me to learn what he called the "higher game" of golf after I got tossed off his golf course in Greensboro for burying my Bulls Eye putter in

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Sam Shelby, *August Sun*, 2011, oil on panel, 5.75" x 11.75"

Linda McFarling, *Tripod Jar*, 2011, salt-soda fired stoneware, 7" x 6" x 6"

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a green after missing a short putt, a hot-headed, club-throwing Visigoth in father's gentlemanly game. His ruse worked; I fell hard for the game of Jones and Palmer and reformed my club-throwing ways. The locals have a saying here — once you get sand in your shoes, you'll always come back.

Fittingly, almost two decades later, this is where I returned in the midst of turmoil and second thoughts about the direction of my journalism career, where my old man met me on the Donald Ross porch for a life-changing conversation on my way from Atlanta for an important job interview at the *Washington Post*, a job I'd long dreamed of having but suddenly didn't see the point of.

Following a round at Pinehurst No. 2 — my first full round of golf in years — we talked and realized I'd had enough of writing about New South crime and Grand Dragons in Alamaba and surprised myself — and all my friends — by withdrawing from consideration at the *Post*, taking myself off instead to a job at iconic *Yankee* Magazine, the nation's oldest and most successful regional magazine at that time. I promptly got myself a yellow pup from the local humane society and found a cabin heated by woodstove on a beautiful bend of the Green River in Vermont, taught myself to fly fish and began playing golf again at an old club in Brattleboro where Rudyard Kipling was living and playing not long after he published *The Jungle Book*.

It was there where I met my first wife and soon moved to Maine and had two beautiful babies and built my dream house made of Canadian hemlock beams on a forested hill not far from the front doors of L.L. Bean, where everything I owned for the next two decades seemed to come from.

Our house in the forest — on a sunny hilltop, ringed by ancient hemlocks and American beeches — became a gathering spot for friends and family, season upon season, the place where I rebuilt the stone walls and created a faux English garden in the woods and was certain my ashes would someday be scattered over the rocky ground.

On early autumn days like these — full of golden October light and cool breezes, a season of bonfires and leaf mold — I used to finish my yard work and sit for long spells on an old blue bench in what I called my "Philosopher's Garden," drinking a beer and watching the afternoon expire, amazed at how far I'd wandered in such a short time.

Years and landscapes pass so quickly. Yet following in the footsteps of my own itinerate newspaperman father and a circuit-riding preacherman I never knew, it struck me that these places of the heart — Wilmington, Greensboro, the Sandhills and coast of Maine — chose me at least as much as I chose them, for each place had something important to teach.

Aunt Emma, I decided, would have approved.

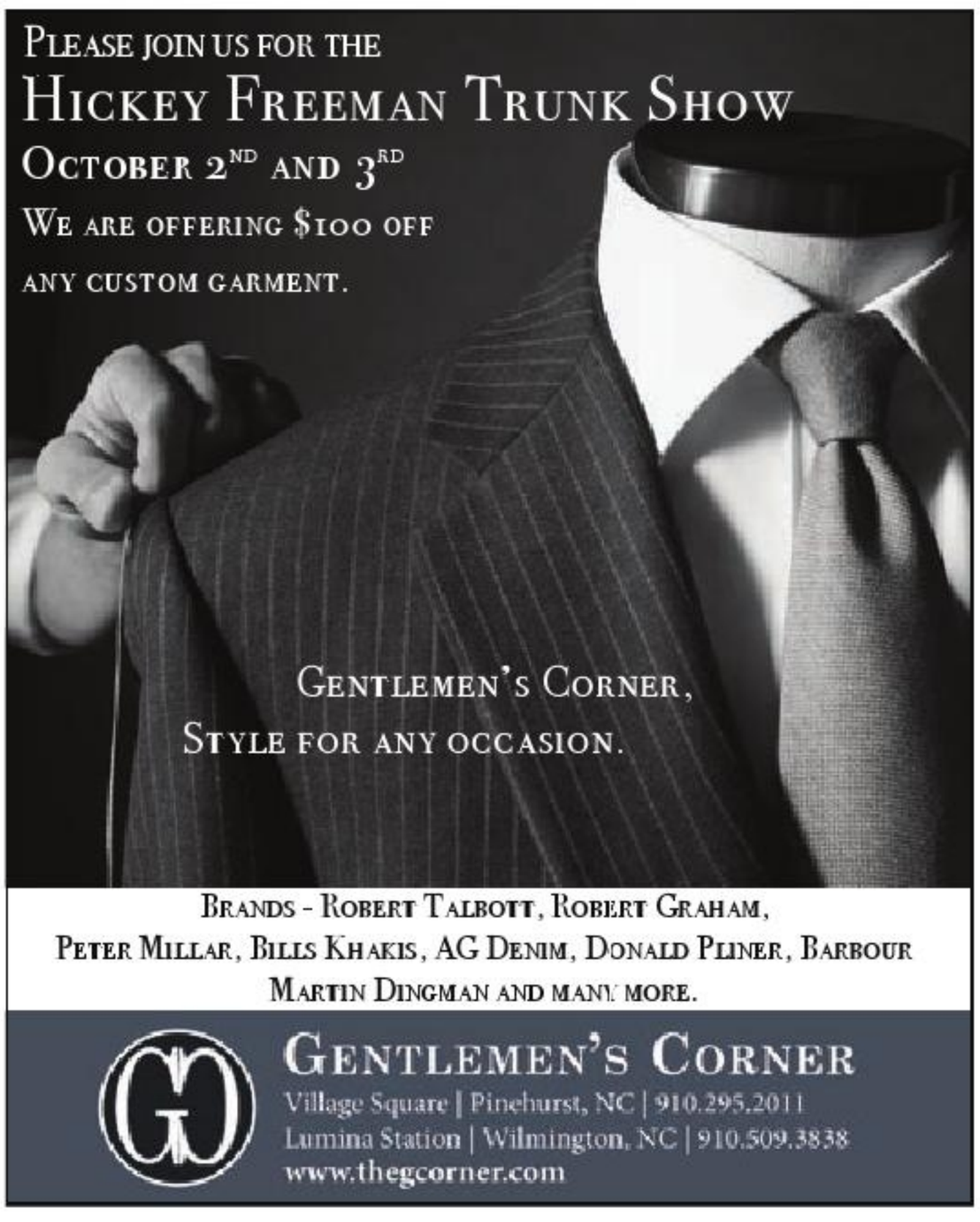
I wrote seven books in a barn on that forested hilltop, buried several beloved dogs and barn cats on the edges of our peaceful woodland keep, got to know garter snakes and the sound of owls and (from a safe distance) a friendly lady porcupine and a lonely young moose who sometimes dropped by for an autumnal visit. After a divorce and proper time of healing, I even got remarried to a woman who is the earth beneath my feet. We hired a great Irish fiddle band, invited a hundred friends and danced way past midnight beneath a harvest moon.

Transcendental poet Henry Thoreau was supposed to have observed that the whole of life is merely one great circle-sailing. The same that carries us far away may eventually bring us back to where we began.

So it was with me, a latter-day circuit-riding transcendentalist. Much to my surprise, I came home to Carolina first to bury a father and later to find the work I've found most satisfying of all in creating the three magazines that keep me forever moving forward, thinking and plotting on winding backroads from the foothills to the sea, season upon season, year upon year.

Old George Washington Tate, I've decided, would approve.

Contact editor Jim Dodson at jim@saltmagazinenc.com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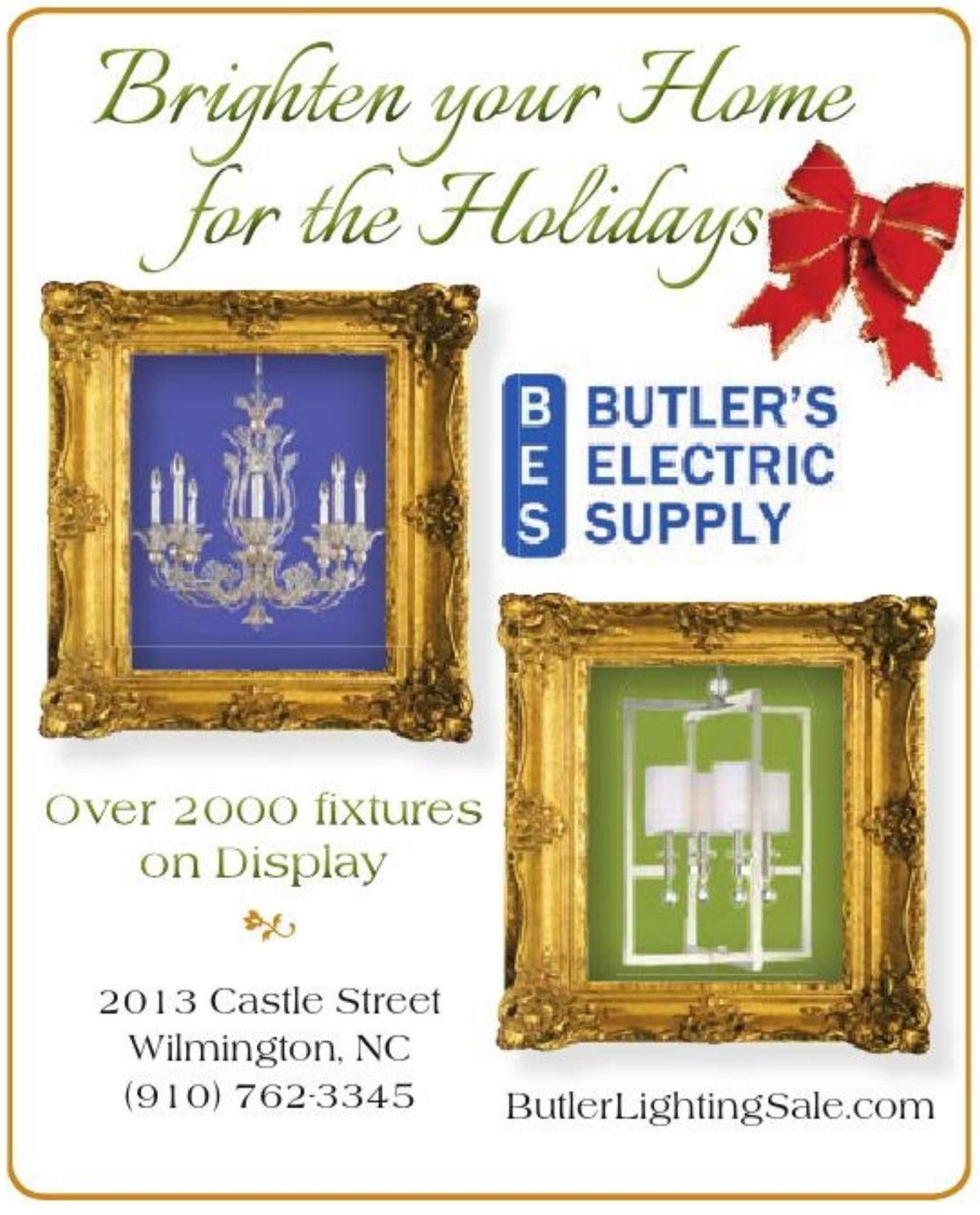
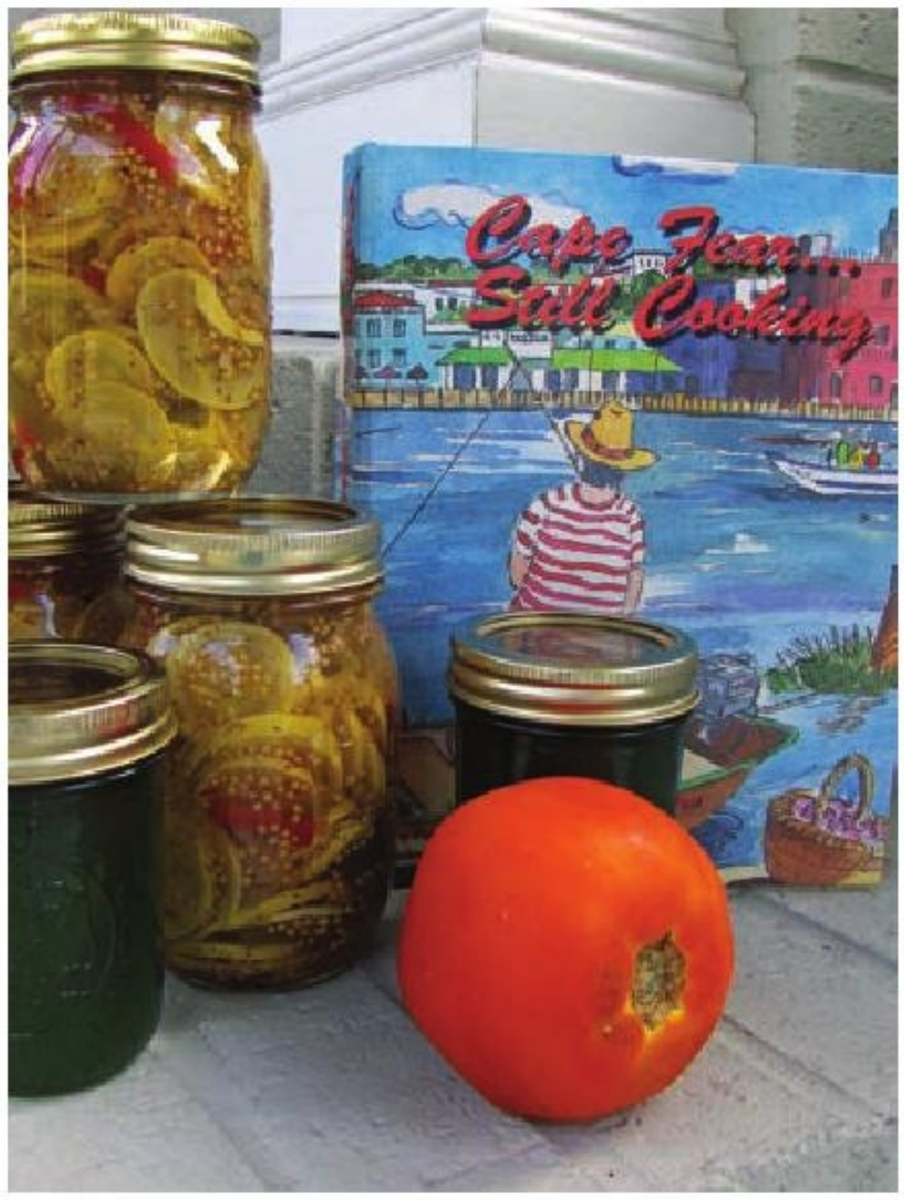


SaltWorks

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

Here's something delicious: an intimate peek into nine local kitchens, none of which you're required to help clean up. Rain or shine, the Residents of Old Wilmington (ROW) will present their annual Back Door Kitchen Tour on Saturday, October 12, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Featured homes include a suite in the J.W. Brooks Building (wholesale grocery warehouse turned riverfront condos), and the newly-renovated Martin-Crouch House on Dock Street, where Carrara marble countertops gleam in the all-white kitchen. Complimentary trolleys provide transportation between homes; tour is self-guided. Tickets: $25/adults; $15/children 12 and under. Tickets available at area Harris Teeters, Finkelstein Music, Wilmington Water Tours, Great Harvest Bread Company, Taste the Olive, Cat on a Whisk, House of Wine & Cheese, or online. Info: www.rowilmington.org/tour.



Yes, the Butter is Real

"For as long as I can remember," says Wilmington darling Annie Gray Johnston, "the day after Labor Day, my mother would start her mantra: *Watcha-making-for-the-sale?* It was a scheduled frenzy, like preparing for a wedding or the impending birth of the next King of England." That sale — the Ministering Circle's Annual Fall Sale, of course — has been a don't-miss-it Port City event for the past 125 years. On Saturday, October 26, from 10 a.m. until noon, stock up on homemade pickles and jams, frozen casseroles, and, says Johnston, "the best caramel cake south of Heaven." Fall Sale veterans know to come an hour early. Annie Gray's advice for newcomers:

· Venerated goodies include Ann Longley's Meeting Street crab casserole, Kate Fox's Edge Hill lace cookies, Elizabeth Wright's beef bourguignon, and Carolyn Hall's beaten biscuits. Do whatever it takes to secure your spot in line for these.

· Buyer beware: If self control isn't your strong suit, stay away from the pound cakes!

The Ministering Circle is a non-profit organization that supports community health care projects and scholarships. Fundraising sale will be held at the Elks Club, 5102 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2520.

Zombie Land

Ready for the zombie apocalypse? Lace up your running shoes and find out. On Sunday, October 13, a Wilmington Zombie Run will be held on the campus of UNCW at 4 p.m. Regardless of whether or not you make it through the 1.5-mile zombie-infested course without being "attacked" (note: no physical contact or force may be used by the zombies or racers), proceeds will help provide service dogs to veterans and children. Registration: $15–20/advance; $20–$25/race day. Info: www.wilmingtonzombierun.com; www.paws4people.org.

Dances with Wolves

Fables on Global Warming, a performance art musical created by punk ballerina/choreographer Karole Armitage, is what happens when contemporary dance, puppetry, and science intersect with talking animals and a handful of talented creatives. "I get so much sustenance from the beauty of nature," says Armitage, who has worked with the likes of Michael Jackson, Madonna, and George Balanchine, one of most prolific and famous choreographers of the 20th century. By using familiar animal fables, Armitage communicates ideas about climate change, preservation and responsibility. Should be totally avant-garde. Performance will be held on Saturday, October 26, at 8 p.m. Tickets: $8–20. Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.uncw.edu/arts.

Vintage, Baby

Since 1966, the Historic Wilmington Foundation has saved hundreds of historic properties from demolition. Help support the cause — and have a wicked good time doing so — at HWF's annual fall fundraiser, The Vintage Event, to be held at the elegantly restored Brooklyn Arts Center on Friday, October 25, 6:30 p.m. Live and silent auctions include fine wines, antiques, and experience packages. No need to wear vintage clothes (although nobody's going to stop you from it). Open bar and heavy hors d'oeuvres make cocktail attire entirely appropriate; live music calls for dancing shoes. Tickets: $175/couple; $100/individual; $50/persons under age 30. Brooklyn Arts Center at St. Andrews, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

The Big Easy

All good things must end. But not without throwing a stellar party first. Celebrate New Orleans — and the closing of Alonzo Wilson's *Well Suited* exhibit — at the Cameron Art Museum, November 1–3. The exhibit, which has been on display at CAM since May 18, features fourteen of the exquisitely crafted Mardi Gras Indian suits that Wilson designed for HBO's award-winning TV series, *Treme*. On Friday, November 1, *Treme* celebrities, Mardi Gras Indians, and New Orleans musicians help transform the Port City into the Big Easy with a CAM fundraiser where you can eat beignets and gumbo until the cows come home. Tickets: $100 (include complimentary beer and wine). Saturday, a panel discussion with actors, writers and producers from *Treme* is followed by an intimate concert by New Orleans musicians; Sunday's your last chance to catch the *Well Suited* exhibit on a tour led by Wilmington son, Alonzo Wilson. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

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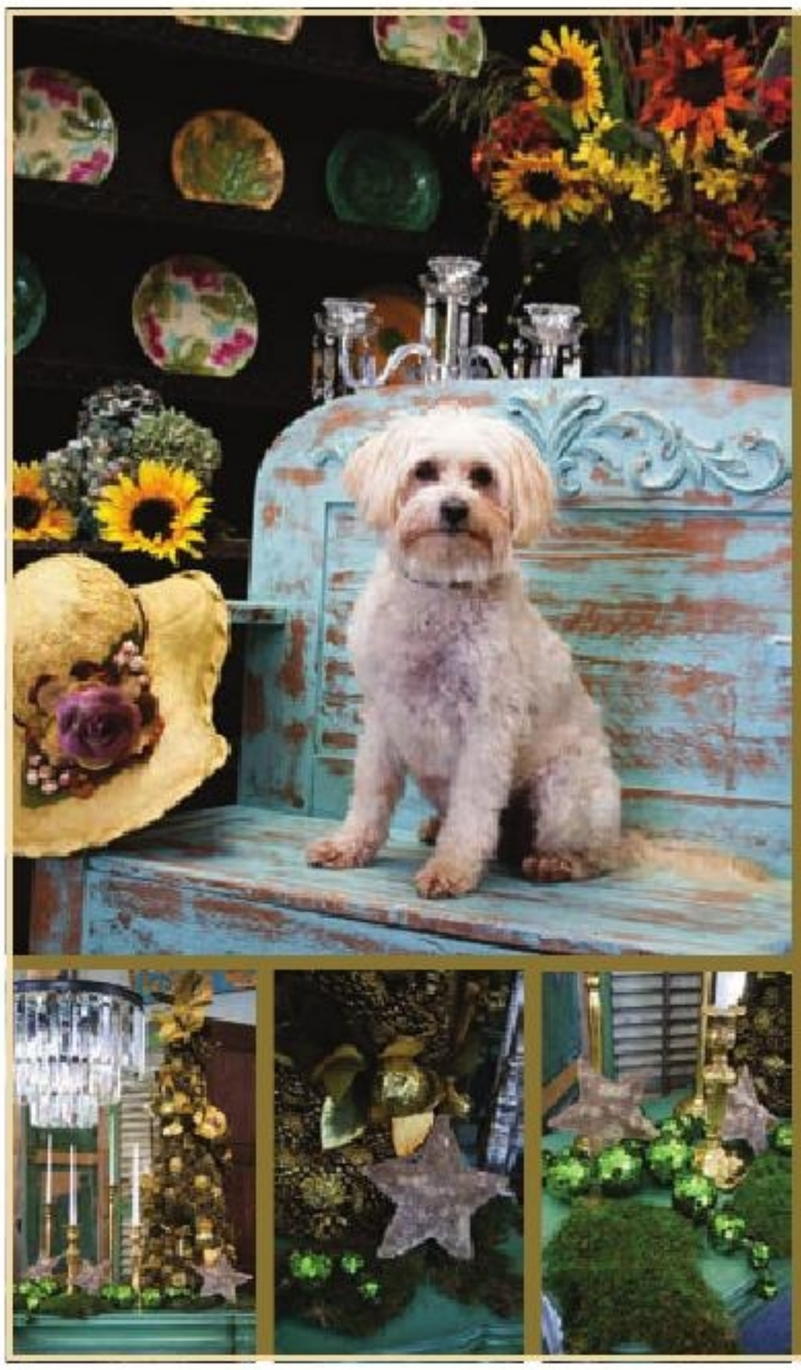

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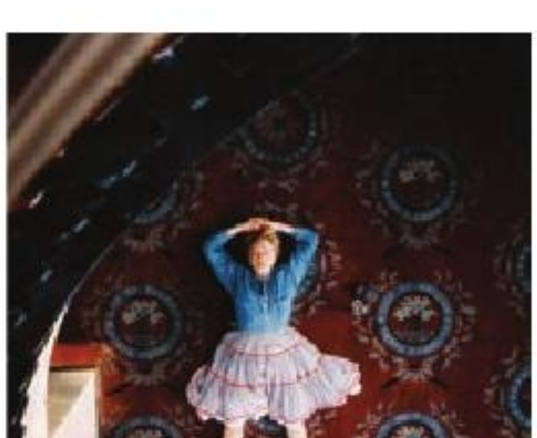
Trained Wonders

The Wilmington Railroad Museum, which is housed inside an authentic 1883 railroad freight warehouse at 505 Nutt Street, is hosting a Model RailRoad Extravaganza on October 19–20, 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Drive trains, build models, watch demonstrations, and, kids, don't leave without your free whistle! Admission: $5; free for ages 5 and under. Info: (910) 763-2634 or www.wrrm.org.

Egg and Hams

In case you missed the September, 2013 issue of *Salt* magazine — the one with Christopher Lloyd on the cover with, yup, an egg balanced on the tip of his finger — here's the scoop: Local still photographer James "Jim" Bridges made a handful of his most notable celebrity photographs available in limited print editions to raise funds for The Full Belly Project, a pioneering nonprofit organization that designs and distributes vital income-generating agricultural devices to rural communities in developing nations. Celebrity prints feature Lloyd, Dennis Hopper, Gene Hackman, Samuel L. Jackson, Anne Heche, Diane Ladd, Jason Robarbs, Shirley MacLaine, John Waters, Nicolas Cage, and Paul Newman. Set of four prints (donors' choice), each signed by Bridges, are available for a $250 donation. Contact Daniel Ling at (910) 452-0975 or info@thefullbellyproject.org for details. To learn more about The Full Belly Project, visit www.thefullbellyproject.org.



*Correction: Photograph of Full Belly Project founder Jock Brandis (page 45, last month's issue of *Salt*) by Rachel Elizabeth Bridges.

Tradition Unlike Any Other

When golf course architect great Pete Dye first saw Landall's rolling hills and the picturesque views of the Intracoastal Waterway, he saw Bermuda fairways, Bentgrass greens, and a world of possibilities. Those who have played the Dye Course at the Country Club of Landfall see why *Golfweek* magazine deemed it one of the best championship environments in the country — and why it's the perfect setting for the Landfall Tradition.

Established in 2002, the Landfall Tradition is a three-day collegiate golf tournament that has hosted over one thousand players from 62 universities, and justifiably gained a reputation as one of the finest women's college golf tournaments in the nation. This year, October 25–27, the eighteen team field features four nationally ranked top-ten colleges: Duke, Alabama, Purdue, and Arizona. The annual college/amateur tournament, which has raised nearly $250,000 for the UNCW golf scholarship fund to date, will be held on Thursday, October 24.

Drawing in tons of local support, the Tradition gives players an at-home feel to complement the friendly competition. Over the weekend, Landfall residents will serve a home-cooked dinner to players from each of the participating colleges. Last year, the UNCW Seahawks were welcomed into the home of Tom and Gaye Rowland, which looks out over the ninth hole of the Marsh Course, for homemade pasta and chicken.

In addition to the four top-ten teams and UNCW, the Tradition will host UNC Chapel Hill, NC State, Wake Forest, University of Virginia, University of South Carolina, UNC Greensboro, University of Michigan, Ohio State, Notre Dame, Ole Miss, Clemson, Oklahoma State, and Iowa State.

The Landfall Tradition is open to the public. For information about sponsorship and volunteering opportunities, visit www.landfalltradition.com, where you can also sign up to play in the college/amateur tournament. — *By David Sloan*

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Love in the Dark

Thalian Hall's Cinematique is just the ticket for a warm end-of-summer night

By Ashley Wahl

The days are getting shorter. Downtown, a crescent moon sinks beneath a fiery horizon, and a welcome breeze — so slight it might have been imagined — brings promise of sweater weather.

At Thalian Hall, the grand old opera house on the corner of Third and Chestnut, patrons claim to feel cold spots, hear strange noises, see apparitions. Tonight this place is haunted. Not by ghosts, but indie film addicts.

***

It's a typical Tuesday night at Thalian. Outside, on-street parking fills like a lawn with fallen leaves. Inside the theater, women wear cardigans.

The lights dim at 7:30 p.m. No time to dally. Get your munchies and find a seat. Cinematique junkies will tell you that the art house movie previews more than justify the $8 ticket. They're sometimes as scrumptious as the feature presentation.

Coming soon: one Woody Allen flick and two offbeat comedies, including a Sundance Film Festival winner about a woman who finds her niche doing movie-trailer voiceovers. Stragglers make their way down the aisle with chocolate candies and champagne splits. One couple is already wrist-deep into a bag of buttered popcorn.

A documentary called *Blackfish* looks dark and chilling. Its glimpse into SeaWorld is unnerving. Orca song abruptly stops and an audio clip reveals the risks of keeping these mighty marine creatures captive: "A whale has eaten one of the trainers." Shiver at the quiver in the voice. When this screen goes black, the balcony erupts with electric whispers. Red velvet seats creak as if responding to the murmurs.

***

Cinematique of Wilmington presents roughly thirty-five classic, foreign and notable films every year. Expect the best of alternative cinema. Flicks you'd find playing at swanky, underground cinemas in New York — not the multiplex. Better still is the 155-year-old Italianate venue where these films are shown.

Since its grand opening in October 1858, Thalian Hall has been a fixture of Port City cultural life. These walls have seen it all. Beneath the foundation: ancient Indian burial grounds.

***

The show begins. A Canadian indie drama called *Still Mine* starring James Cromwell and Geneviève Bujold, the French-Canadian actress who, in her younger years, informed Clint Eastwood that she "didn't think that [her] character and his character ought to make love" in his 1984 suspense thriller, *Tightrope*. Nearly three decades later, she and Cromwell are Irene and Craig Morrison, a New Brunswick couple in their twilight years. Say the critics: They make love seem real.

The plot, based on a true story, goes something like this: 89-year-old Craig Morrison and his wife, Irene, continue to live the hardscrabble life they've known since youth, but they've got a passion for one another that neither time nor wrinkles can fade. When Irene's memory begins to wane — she leaves an oven mitt on a burner and, later, falls down a flight of stairs — Craig decides to build a smaller, more suitable house for her on another part of their property. Although his shipbuilding father taught him how to make a sound structure, Craig faces jail time by refusing to bring his house to code. The humor is wry, the sensuality is surprising, and the performances are solid. During one particular scene, a raucous symphony of sniffles accompanies a Mumford and Sons song.

Night has always pushed up day
You must know life to see decay

Suddenly, the room feels cold.

***

"All theaters are haunted," says Tony Rivenbark with a sly grin. "Every performer who has ever been here is, in a sense, still here. It's much more interesting than hanging around in purgatory."

Rivenbark, who has served as executive director at Thalian for 34 years, would surely know if friendly ghosts live here.

"Actually," adds Rivenbark, "I don't think haunted is the right word, but I do consider this building to have a spirit."

Consider the number of performances that have taken place here, he says. The number of people who have been excited or shed tears. "Those moments create an extraordinary energy, and that energy is retained in the building."

Front Street may be home base, but senior editor Ashley Wahl is prone to wander.

A Waltz With Mark Basquill

How mental health training — and love of family — keep this popular Wilmington playwright going

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

By Gwenyfar Rohler

The well-known image of the "stage parent" — the overbearing, disappointed father or mother who hangs his or her own expectations on the child – is a frequently relied upon image for writers. But what do you do when it goes the other direction? When your harshest critic is your offspring? In Mark Basquill's case, he laughs and is proud of having raised two such talented and discerning young performers. After all, his journey to playwriting began with them. Patrick and Joe Basquill, both regular faces on the local stage, grew up in children's theater here. Eventually Dad found himself auditioning for a few community theater roles and discovered he liked performing and having another activity in common with his children. So, though he started as a novelist, it was a natural extension to try playwriting. "I liked to write short stories and tried novels, but writing is solitary and it turned out to be much more fun to collaborate with people," Basquill says.

Though old enough to have kids in college, Basquill flashes a boyish grin that belies his years. "As I worked with director Steve Vernon I realized you are not trying to write a story about everything and take Melville's 8,000-page approach. You need to find a way to tell a good story in two acts in two hours." Basquill pauses, then confesses, "Honestly, for me, that limit is a good structure."

Vernon, currently artistic director for Big Dawg Productions, directed Basquill's first full-length production in 2008, *Christmas Vigil*, which premiered at Thalian Hall. "Standing out in front of Thalian Hall with the poster of my show up there — knowing that Oscar Wilde had performed there?" Basquill shakes his head in disbelief. "That was historically humbling." But that was just a byproduct of getting to see very talented people bring his words to life, to flesh them out and give them deeper nuance and meaning. It was intoxicating like a drug, and Basquill was hooked.

"Standing out in front of Thalian Hall with the poster of my show up there — knowing that Oscar Wilde had performed there?" Basquill shakes his head in disbelief. "That was historically humbling."

Five years later he is back with another play, this one titled *A Waltz With Flowers*. A family drama focusing around the Fourth of July in 2009, this new play has allowed Basquill to explore themes in an artistic manner that he works with clinically every day at his "put bread on the table job," which is in the mental health field. He spends his days trying to help people develop skills and perspectives to cope with trauma. Playwriting allows him to explore these themes in an artistic rather than clinical way.

When asked if his years of psychological study help with character development, Basquill chuckles. "You would think that would help, but I find it an obstacle." Years with the academic mindset for writing is a hard habit to break. "I constantly am working for citation for every line — where does this come from, how does this work — from an academic to an artistic perspective is challenging. The academic is looking to be right or at least defensible." Basquill pauses, then looks me in the eye as if preparing to reveal a deep secret. "Really, the role of the artist across genres is to be honest."

He points to the great icons of playwriting — Tennessee Williams, Eugene O'Neil, and William Shakespeare — and how they used language to achieve just those aims of uncovering truth. "You can't go two minutes as an audience member without nuance of character being revealed or a truism that now you see." He is fascinated by the multilayered plots that each worked with to explore many of the same themes that keep Basquill intrigued: forgiveness, family, identity and the struggle for harmony. Art reflects life and vice versa. When you explore the deepest reaches of human consciousness every day in your profession, it only makes sense that you would search for answers in your relationship with art, too.

"So much of the strife and distress that I see is really rooted in family conflict and people not being able to forgive — and it really comes back to families and forgiveness, and it circles back around."

So what did his harshest critics think of *A Waltz With Flowers?*

"Oh, Dad! You didn't go there did you? Do you know how clichéd that is?" was one response.

Patrick just dropped the script on the ground in the backyard and announced he had to go for a walk.

Basquill grins, "They're usually right."

A Waltz With Flowers *opens in November at Big Dawg Productions Theatre Company's Cape Fear Playhouse at 613 Castle Street in Wilmington. For tickets and information, call (910) 367-5237 or visit www.bigdawgproductions.org.*

Gwenyfar Rohler fell in love with theater at Thalian Hall on her sixth birthday. She spends her days managing her family's bookstore on Front Street.

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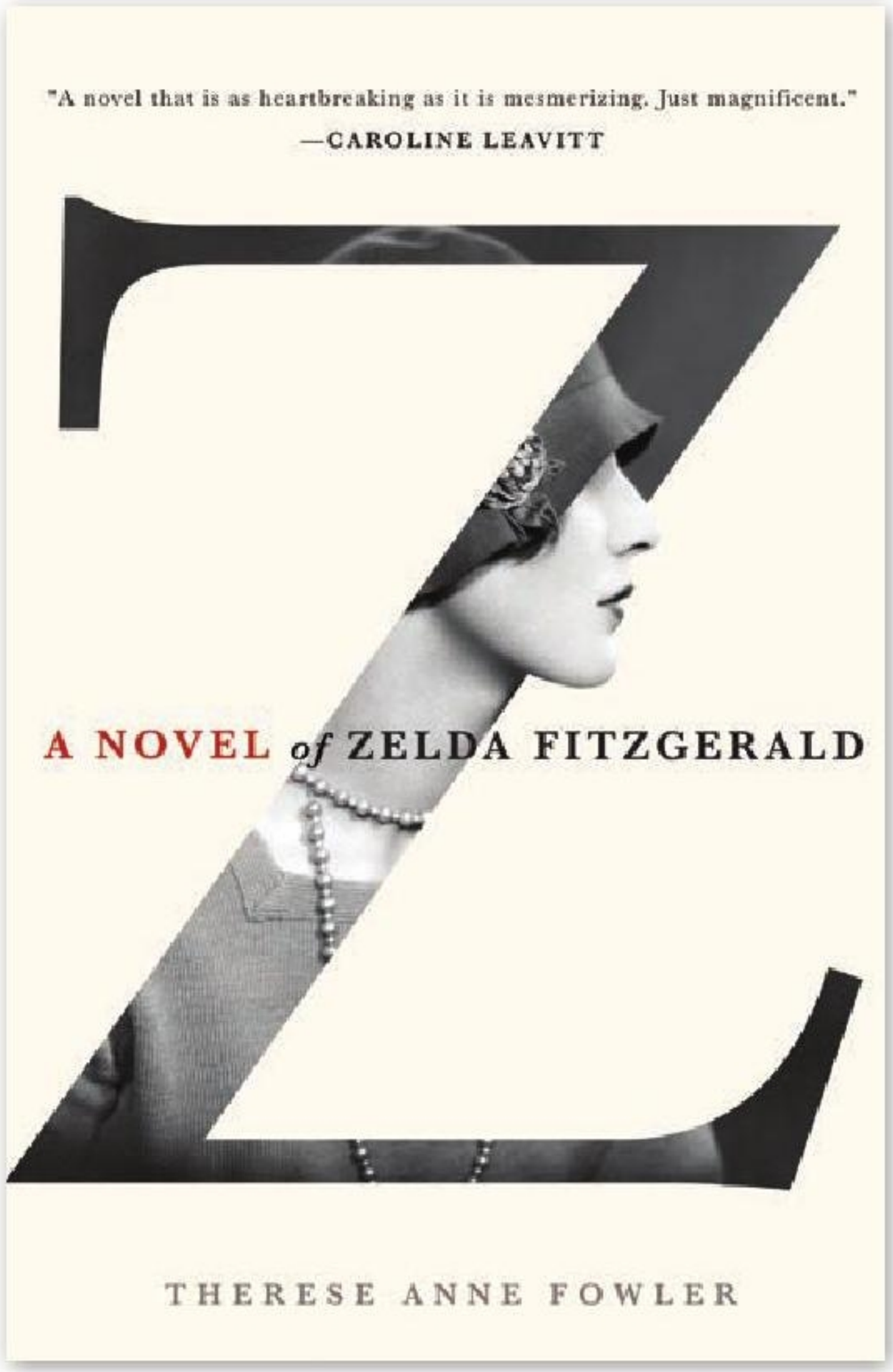
"A novel that is as heartbreaking as it is mesmerizing. Just magnificent."
—CAROLINE LEAVITT
A NOVEL of ZELDA FITZGERALD
THERESE ANNE FOWLER

By Stephen E. Smith

Addicted to alcohol, constantly in debt and more or less forgotten by the reading public, F. Scott Fitzgerald was, during his later years, a writer in search of his earlier success. He never found it. Shortly before his death, he admitted to a friend that he considered himself a failure. How delighted he'd be to learn that his novels and short stories — and the misadventure that was his life with Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald — have blossomed into a multi-million-dollar business.

Seventy years after his untimely passing, Fitzgerald is again the mythical man of the hour. His fiction is soundly ensconced in the literary canon, *The Great Gatsby* and the short story "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" have been the basis for recent box office hits, and authors and publishers are tapping into this popular resurgence by releasing novels based on the lives of the Fitzgeralds. R. Clifton Spargo's *Beautiful Fools*, Erika Robuck's *Call Me Zelda*, and Lee Smith's latest *Guests on Earth* — all of them told in the third person or from the points of view of characters who interact with the Fitzgeralds — are among these publications. Only Therese Anne Fowler's *Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald* is written in the first person and from the point of view of its subject — an undertaking that is both audacious and dangerous.

A reader's ability to suspend disbelief depends, in part, on how familiar he or she is with the facts surrounding the Fitzgeralds' lives. Since *The New Republic* published Glenway Wescott's "The Moral of Scott Fitzgerald" in 1941, the public has been treated to a steady stream of biographies that delve into — and exploit — Scott's every alcoholic shenanigan. But it wasn't until the 1971 publication of Nancy Milford's best-selling *Zelda* that the circumstances of Zelda's life became common knowledge. Coinciding with the rise of the women's movement, Milford's portrayal of Zelda as the talented but repressed American feminist gave rise to the popular notion that she was the force behind her husband's early success. After all, Zelda was the subject and inspiration for much of his fiction, and she was an artist in her own right, dancing, painting, producing short stories and essays, and eventually publishing a novel, *Save Me the Waltz*, a confusing autobiographical depiction of her marriage to Scott.

Readers who possess a smattering of biographical information regarding the Fitzgeralds tend to consider themselves experts on the subject. (Perhaps this explains why the late Matthew J. Bruccoli, the foremost Fitzgerald scholar, was always in a bad mood — all those know-nothings nagging him with silly questions. Even the critic Edmund Wilson grew cantankerous when besieged by Fitzgerald's admirers.) It may well be that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, but when reading *Z* it's a prerequisite to becoming embroiled in the novel's soapy intrigues. It's likely that the casual Fitzgerald aficionado, freed from the tyranny of fact, will find Fowler's protagonist

believable and sympathetic.

Any explication of the Fitzgeralds' lives is bound to be an exercise in namedropping, and as with Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*, most of the requisite luminaries are present in Z, if only in passing – Pound, Anderson, Elliot, Perkins, the Bankheads, Porter, Wolfe, Parker, Ford, Picasso, Stein, the Murphys, Joyce. Even North Carolina's James Boyd rates a mention as "critic and novelist" (novelist certainly; critic not so much). Readers will no doubt enjoy the glib banter of the famous and witty, even if the characters never uttered a word of the dialogue attributed to them.

For the thoroughly schooled Fitzgerald enthusiast, knowing too much about the subject raises so many questions regarding the authenticity of the novel that the flow of the narrative is interrupted in every paragraph and snatch of dialogue. Fowler addresses this problem in her "Author's Note and Acknowledgements," which, oddly enough, appears at the end of the novel: "This book is a work of fiction, but because it's based on the lives of real people, I have tried to adhere as much as possible to the established particulars of those people's lives. . . . Fiction based on real people differs from nonfiction in that the emphasis is not on factual minutiae, but rather on the emotional journey of the characters" — an explanation that does little to assuage the reader's misgivings.

Beyond the obligatory feminist agenda, the central focus of Z is a speculative exploration of the relationships between Scott, Zelda and their fellow expatriate Ernest Hemingway, who is the story's obvious antagonist. Did Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway have a homosexual relationship? Did Hemingway attempt to seduce Zelda? "Thinking my anger would only amuse I decided to turn the tables on him [Hemingway] instead. I reached between us . . . taking my time, letting him think he might yet take advantage of *both* Fitzgeralds tonight. . . ."

Of course, everyone loves gossip — except the subjects of the gossip — and all of the principals in Z are long gone. Only the novelist can say for sure what they said. And if Fowler's reinvention of Zelda and the peripatetic Lost Generation is no slave to fact, well, in the final analysis, it's an amusing read that dwindles to a beautifully poetic conclusion. What more can a reader ask?

As for the lives of the real Fitzgeralds, we're way beyond putting Humpty Dumpty back together again. When one of our heroes doesn't supply the answers we expect, we simply rewrite his or her story. Who knows? Maybe it'll have a happy ending.

Stephen E. Smith's most recent book of poems is A Short Report on the Fire at Woolworths. *He can be reached at travisses@hotmail.com.*

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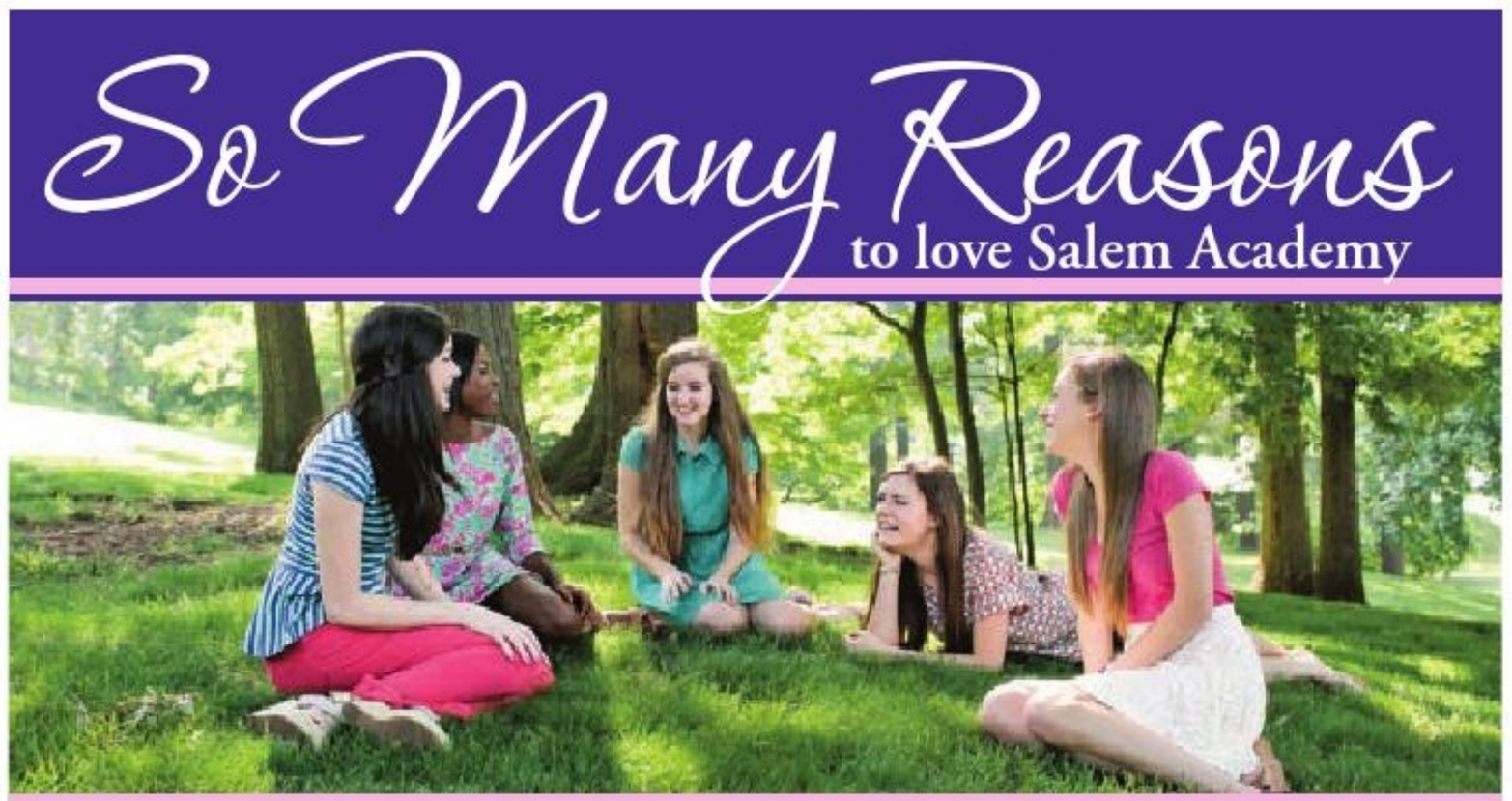
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Sweet and Scary

I hate Halloween, which may explain why I love it

By Ann Ipock

After having spent the last several weeks of summer trying to lose weight — forgive me if I brag a little, but it actually worked — you can imagine how annoyed I am to see candy sprouting up like dandelions in the spring. It haunts me at the checkout at the grocery store, makes me sick to see it at the drugstore, and tempts the bargain-hunter in me with those two-for-one deals at the dollar store. It's free at the dry cleaners. Maybe they're hoping you'll drop a Milk Dud on your $150 pair of greige linen slacks, necessitating additional business for them. At the gym, there are bowls of Tootsie Rolls, free for the taking. Don't they realize eating this candy will add rolls to their clients? Wait, of course they do . . .

I would just as soon the Halloween holiday be eliminated. Banish it from the calendars being printed for 2014. Outlaw the dang thing! Nothing kills a diet quite like it.

Speaking of diet, I hate that word. I hate to even say I've been on a diet. You do know what D.I.E.T. stands for, right? Did I Eat That? Because, let's face it, scrawny celery and carrot sticks, skinny chicken breasts and quinoa don't exactly satisfy, and when your tummy is growling, you can't remember if you ate or not.

My favorite and most successful food plan to date has been to eat half portions. It's a no-brainer, really: You pay for lunch at your favorite restaurant, eat half and then take the other half home for supper. It's a twofer. Plus, you lose weight quickly because, in theory, you're cutting your calories by 50 percent. Also, you can eat anything you want (within reason) because you're only eating half. My other rules are to eat three healthy meals per day, one mid-afternoon snack — something healthy like almonds or granola — and nothing after supper.

But the retailers and store owners are bound and determined to trick (not treat) us into submission, especially with those enticing, brightly colored, cute-as-buttons, fun-sized bags of candy. They seem so innocuous. How many calories can there possibly be in a handful of those darling little Milky Way bars? Let me tell you: a lot more than you think!

And the other thing that gets me: those rare, lesser known candies, like marshmallow Circus Peanuts, always pop up during Halloween season. If I don't buy them now, I tell myself, then I'll have to wait another whole year to find them again. This screwy reasoning of mine also says it won't hurt to buy a baby bag of Skittles even though I would never buy a full-size bag after Halloween.

Halloween is nothing but a money-making scam. If you don't believe it, just look at the shops that pop up in late summer that sell strictly Halloween items. There is even a local store in town that sells Halloween stuff year-round. I haven't been there yet, but I have always wondered how I'd look in a Marilyn Monroe wig, or how my husband, Russell, would look as Superman . . .

That said, I do love to decorate my house for Halloween. I don't go all out like some neighbors and string black and orange lights, plastic skeletons and spider webs in the front yard. I put out my stacked orange pumpkin statue with the black hat and, much to the chagrin of our Clemson-hating, USC graduate daughter, Katie, slap a big orange bow on my door wreath. For many years, I had a crazy witch with a cauldron, almost life-sized, cut out of plywood and painted. I think my better half accidentally-on-purpose dropped her off at a recycling bin when I wasn't looking. Truth be told, I usually finish off my decorating with bowls of — yep, you guessed it — candy. Orange — sorry, Katie — purple and black taffy in colored wrappers . . .

I guess I'm a sucker for Halloween after all.

Ann Ipock is an award-winning Southern author, humorist and speaker whose books include the Life is Short *series. She may be reached at amipock@ec.rr.com.*

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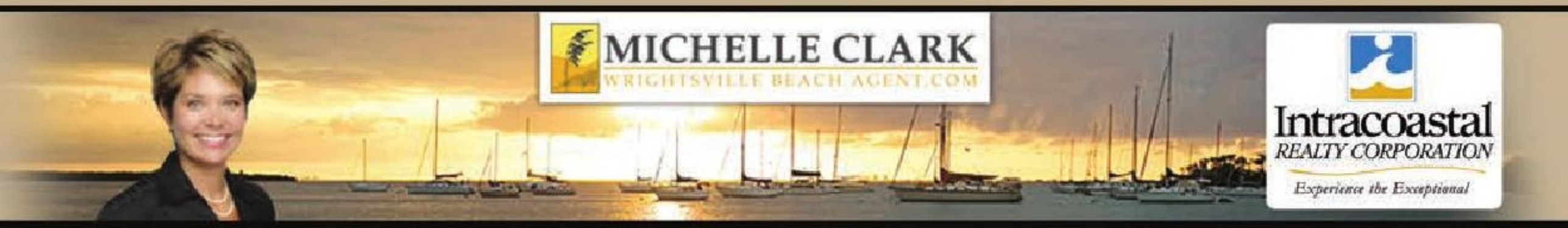

Fashionably Old-Fashioned

With the coming of autumn, nothing is cooler

By Frank Daniels III

The whispers of fall – leaves showering from the maples, poplars and oaks, not really cold enough for a fire, but when has that stopped us? – and finally a quiet evening. Time to reflect . . .

My grandfather loved Old-Fashioned cocktails; he would have a couple nearly every evening after work. When he got older, Dr. Gaddy told him he could only have one a day, no more, preferably less. I recall that as the months went by, his glass kept getting bigger, but he only had one. I can see him now, his silver-maned leonine head bent forward by 80-odd years of corralling his brothers and then his son, chuckling at putting one over on young Dr. Gaddy.

Or, on this rare quiet evening, time to choose a book, perhaps something we cheated ourselves out of when we were younger:

When him and the old lady come down in the morning all the family got up out of their chairs and give them good-day, and didn't set down again till they had set down. Then Tom and Bob went to the sideboard where the decanter was, and mixed a glass of bitters and handed it to him, and he held it in his hand and waited till Tom's and Bob's was mixed, and then they bowed and said, 'Our duty to you, sir, and madam; and THEY bowed the least bit in the world and said thank you, and so they drank, all three, and Bob and Tom poured a spoonful of water on the sugar and the mite of whisky or apple brandy in the bottom of their tumblers, and give it to me and Buck, and we drank to the old people too.

(Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1885.)

Some have called the Old-Fashioned the original whiskey cocktail, a mixture of sugar, bitters, a small amount of water (to melt the sugar) and rye whiskey, cooled by a couple of large ice cubes. Regardless, a cocktail that is described in the great American novel, and has glassware named for it, deserves our full attention.

The Old-Fashioned is fun, simple to make well, and lends itself to experimentation with the basic ingredients to make the cocktail sweeter, drier or even tart.

The quality of the whiskey is paramount. If you want a sweeter Old-Fashioned, use a Kentucky straight bourbon like Woodford Reserve, Four Roses Single Barrel, or, if you can find it, something like WhipperSnapper from Oregon's Ransom Distillery. For a drier, almost tart Old-Fashioned, use a quality 100 percent rye such as Sazerac Rye or Black Maple Hill Rye Whiskey.

The fun part of making an Old-Fashioned is the muddle, where you get to make a mess in the bottom of the glass, and is a good place to experiment. Originally the muddle was made with a sugar cube, bitters, an orange slice and a bit of water, and if you are using rye whiskey, this muddle is excellent, with the sugar balancing the dry tartness of rye. With the sweeter tasting Kentucky bourbons, I leave out the sugar and enjoy muddling the orange slice with a bit of lemon zest along with Cointreau or Combier Orange Liqueur and bitters.

Until recently almost everyone I know used traditional Angostura bitters, but there are a spreading variety of bitters available to try. I have experimented with Peychaud's, Regan's and Fee Brothers, though I generally stick with the old Angostura.

Lastly, I love cocktails that suit glassware. Forgive my pettiness, but a martini from a Riedel martini glass with a rim that is so thin it disappears just tastes better. And an Old-Fashioned desires a heavy-bottomed double old-fashioned glass that feels sturdy in your fist; one that holds a substantial amount of whiskey and a couple of large, slowly melting ice cubes.

The Old-Fashioned is a cocktail that pleases your senses. The sight of condensation beading on the outside of the glass, the rich smell and taste of good whiskey, the sound of ice, the feel of the weighty glass as you lift it to your lips . . . each sense adds to the enjoyment.

Cheers . . .

Old-Fashioned

1 sugar cube (or 2 tsp. sugar or Splenda)
3 dashes Angostura bitters
1/4 oz Cointreau or Combier Orange Liqueur
Lemon zest
1/2 orange slice
1 maraschino cherry
2 1/2 oz Kentucky straight bourbon or 100 percent rye whiskey

In a chilled old-fashioned glass, soak sugar with bitters and orange liqueur.
Add lemon zest, half orange slice and cherry. Muddle well.
Fill glass with ice and add whiskey. Stir well to combine flavors.
Garnish with orange and cherry.

Frank Daniels III is an editor and writer living in Nashville, Tennessee who frequently visits Wilmington. His cocktail book is Frank's Little Black Bar Book, *Wakestone Press. Contact him at fdanielsiii@mac.com*

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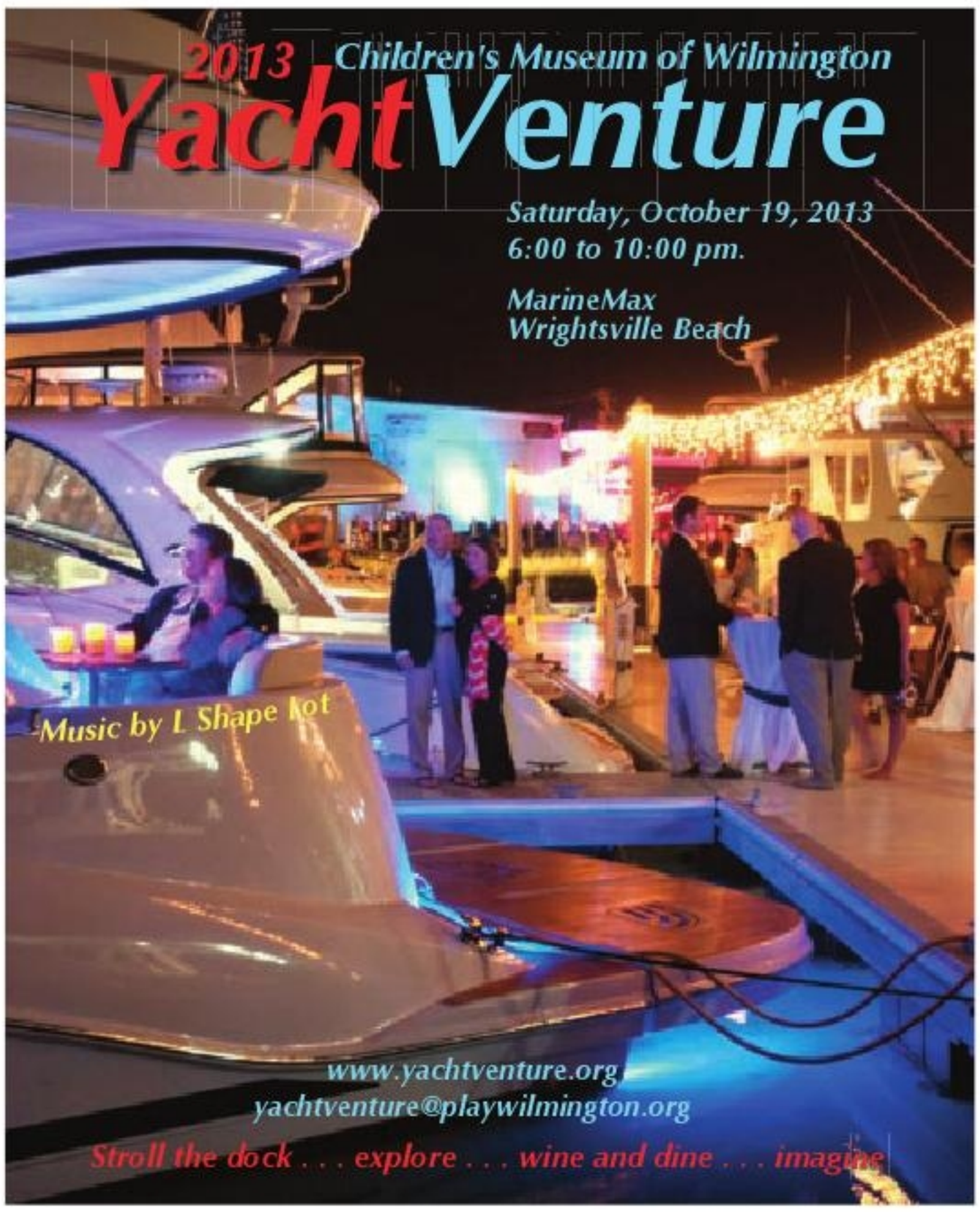
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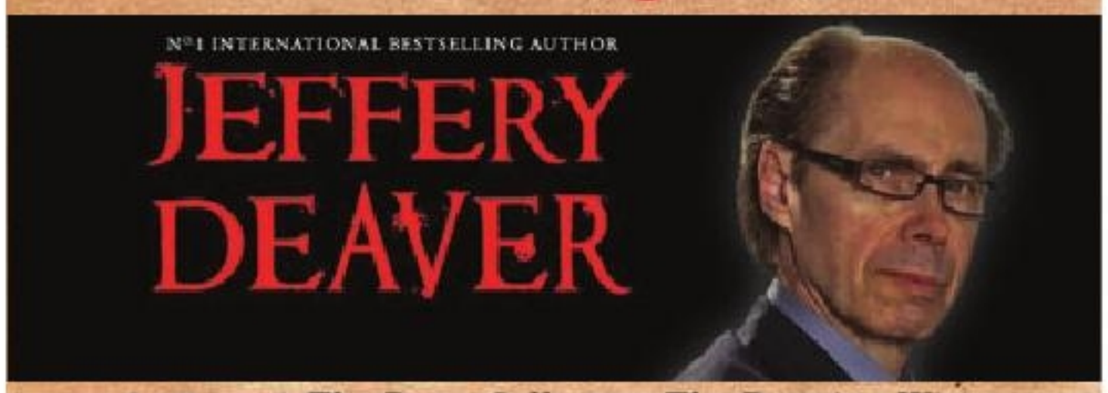

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The Value of Bordeaux

Once the darling of high-priced collectors, now a great wine for all

By Robyn James

For centuries,

Bordeaux has been surrounded by the hype of the high priced collector's wines. The Bordelais can blame themselves for that; they came up with the 1855 classification that ranked the chateaux by growth, labeling them first growth, second growth and so on, with the idea that the chateau could command a certain price based on the higher growth classification it had.

Bordeaux is divided into two areas referring to what side of the Garonne river they reside. There is the left bank, where cabernet sauvignon is king and where all the chateaux are classified. Then there is right bank, which is predominantly Merlot but which remains unclassified.

By law, only six red grapes can be grown in Bordeaux: Cabernet sauvignon, Merlot, Petit verdot, Mablec, Cabernet franc, Carménère.

Bordeaux must be a blended wine. The winemaker may use all of these grapes in the blend but he must use at least two.

Because the press usually focuses on the very expensive first growths of Bordeaux, many consumers do not realize that this region can be the best priced area for people seeking high quality red wines with character, along with the ability to age and evolve. In the last twenty years, Bordeaux has attracted young, aggressive winemakers and marketers interested in reaching consumers from all walks of life, introducing them to the magic of Bordeaux.

Bordeaux is geographically larger than most imagine and there are many growers that offer great values in their second and third label wines.

Even the process of selling Bordeaux is unique when compared to other regions. Customers actually have no contact with the chateau owners because all of the wine is sold to negociants (importers), who then distribute it across the world.

Some of the best value regions to get Bordeaux from are Bordeaux Superieur, Côtes de Blaye, Côtes de Bordeaux, Côtes de Bourg and Fronsac, along with a lot of other little "satellite" areas.

We have had three strong vintages in Bordeaux, 2009, 2010 and 2011, and the value wines are made in delicious fruit-forward, stylish ways for current drinking. Here are some delicious examples:

Chateau Vieux Manoir Bordeaux Rouge, France, 2009, $10 bottle

Nicely toasty, with vanilla and espresso notes up front, but the core of raspberry, blackberry and boysenberry fruit rushes in behind it, with a long, licorice-filled finish. From a great vintage for Bordeaux!

Chateau de Fontenille Grand Bordeaux Rouge, France, 2010, $13 bottle

"Ripe and spicy, this is an attractive package of warm tannins and red berries. This wine has a solid, dry core — delicious." Rated 85 Points, *The Wine Enthusiast*

Chateau Tour de Mirambeau Bordeaux Reserve Rouge, France, 2010, $15 bottle

"Wood-aged and smoky, this is a solid, firm wine. It is balanced, and its ripe fruits are already present, offering a rich experience of warm tannins and black plum fruitiness. It will broaden and soften over the next 3–4 years." Rated 90 Points, *The Wine Enthusiast*

Master sommelier Robyn James has been in the retail and wholesale wine business for over 25 years.

A Little Art Talk and Baked Sushi

Rhonda Bellamy of the Arts Council of Wilmington discovers an intriguing new taste in a city where food is an art form

By Dana Sachs

I've lived in Wilmington for seventeen years, and I can think of two, maybe three, friends who were born in this city. The rest moved here from somewhere else: Paris and Pinehurst, Boston and Boone, Washington and Wallace.

Rhonda Bellamy arrived in the 1970s, kicking and screaming. She was a New York City high school girl whose parents, both Wilmington natives, decided to return to their roots. "I call Wilmington 'the ancestral home,'" she says, but, still, "I had a really traumatic time when we first moved here. It was a definite culture shock."

Since then, Bellamy has lived most of her life in this city; and the only hint of her New York past is a bit of a Northeast accent. For two decades, she worked as a broadcast journalist, serving most recently as news director of the five-station Cumulus Media cluster and hosting a two-hour talk show, "On the Waveline with Rhonda Bellamy." In 2012, though, Bellamy became the executive director of the new Arts Council of Wilmington. The woman who was dragged down here as a teenager has now become one of the city's chief boosters. "I'm going to bloom where I'm planted," she'll tell you.

Rhonda and I met for lunch at Sunny Sushi and Lounge on North Front Street, and, before we really had a chance to talk, we spent a long time contemplating the menu. I say "contemplating" because it runs for so many pages and offers so many different kinds of specialty sushi that one has to read closely to decide between rolls like Blue Heaven, Blue Velvet, Atlantic Blue, Blue Devil and Dynamite Blue (each of these dishes features blue crab, but, other than that, the ingredients are wildly different, ranging from sweet potato to cream cheese to tempura shrimp).

"What is a 'baked sushi'?" Rhonda asked, looking down at one section of the menu.

Alex Souvannarath, who owns the restaurant with his brother, Sunny Souvannaratvongseuk, the sushi chef, explained that, for the "baked" sushi, Sunny makes the roll, then dredges it in rice flour and dunks it very quickly in the deep fryer. That way, he said, "Pregnant women can order it without worrying about eating raw fish."

Rhonda looked skeptical. "So it's not baked," she pointed out. "It's fried."

I think that, for both of us, the idea of either a "baked" or "fried" sushi seemed like a contradiction in terms. Isn't part of the point of sushi that you eat it fresh-out-of-the-ocean — I mean, dig-in-like-a-caveman fresh?

While we waited to find out, we discussed the changes we've seen in the city since each of us moved here. Don't talk to me about life before Whole Foods and Trader Joe's. I got here in 1996, which means that I can remember life before Carmike and Target, Flaming Amy's and the Cameron Art Museum. Rhonda beat me, though. "My grandmother lived on Tenth Street between Wooster and Queen," she said. "That was a dirt road."

Wilmington has always had a thriving arts community — the Thalian Association was founded in 1788, two years before the ratification of the U.S. Constitution — but Rhonda explained that, as major corporations like General Electric, Corning, and PPD began to open offices here, expectations for the city's cultural offerings began to rise. "Somebody once told me," she said, "that people decide if they can live somewhere before they decide if they can work somewhere." New residents wanted a more vibrant arts scene, and, over time, that scene began to develop.

As a city grows, an arts council can take on a primary role in helping to

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

support the creative community and, as Rhonda said, "establish the region as an arts destination." You may love the Cameron Art Museum, the North Carolina Black Film Festival, and Chamber Music Wilmington. All of these organizations become stronger, though, with the support of an arts council, which uses hard facts to appeal to fiscal-minded government leaders. In 2010, nonprofit arts organizations injected $5.7 million in direct expenditures into the local economy. Audiences spent another $15 million themselves. Rhonda's job is to take those kinds of figures to budget meetings and help ensure that creative enterprises get support and funding. In addition to its role as an advocate, the council also sponsors an evolving exhibition of pedestrian art downtown, coordinates the monthly Fourth Friday Gallery Walks, and awards North Carolina Arts Council grants to local artists.

Talk of the arts led to talk of food because suddenly our table was covered with plates. Here's what I have to say about sushi: I am a purist. I love salmon with cream cheese on a bagel, but don't let cream cheese go anywhere near my salmon maki. I want to taste the raw fish. So, I looked down at Sunny's Men in Black Roll ("I love movies," he told us, explaining the name) with some concern. The ingredients included blue crab, avocado, asparagus and low-fat cream cheese, all of which were "flash fried" (another word for "baked," I guess) in a rice tempura crust. Could I taste the crab, though?

I'm happy to say that the cream cheese did not overpower the fish and, in a certain sense, it actually helped to meld the various ingredients into a single complex flavor, rather than just a bunch of different parts. Plus, that rice tempura shell has a distinct attraction. As Rhonda said, "I love the crunch."

However, I'm still partial to the basic sushi: fish and rice, with maybe a smear of wasabi and some seaweed. Try Sunny's simple but beautiful eel nigiri, for example. It's a hunk of perfectly smoked fish, drizzled with house-made soy glaze, on a mound of white rice. Or, taste the slices of fresh salmon, curled around each other on the plate with no other accompaniment. Nothing could be simpler, except that, without extra stuff to hide behind, a chef has to use the finest fish. Sunny's was luscious.

Like me, Rhonda reserved her warmest praise for the fish itself, which was ample and delicious. "Some sushi places," she said, "just give you 'essence of' a certain fish, but, this, I can really taste the crab."

We stared down at the gorgeous disks of sushi in front of us, a rainbow of reds, whites, greens, yellows, pinks and oranges. "This is why I consider the culinary field one of the arts," Rhonda said.

Sunny Sushi and Lounge, 141 North Front Street, Wilmington. The restaurant also serves Thai food and plans to begin serving hibachi and Vietnamese pho soon. At lunch, they offer two sushi rolls for $8.95.

You can read more about the Arts Council of Wilmington at artscouncilofwilmington.org.

Dana Sachs' latest novel, The Secret of the Nightingale Palace, *is available at bookstores throughout Wilmington.*

Life in a Busy Satellite

Ever changing, always interesting, with Original Sin on tap and on top

By Jason Frye

If North Carolina is the universe, then Asheville, Charlotte, Raleigh and the Outer Banks are the obvious galaxies. Wilmington? Wilmington's a nebula, a place of flux where shape and intent are forever changing as the Port City's night life evolves.

At Satellite Bar and Lounge, the multiplicity of Wilmington's scenes become a singular. Consider it the heart of the Wilmington Nebula.

The popular tavern reposes at 120 Greenfield Street. Right across from the trendy South Front Apartments — the tenements turned beautiful, all-brick, gated complex that offers hipsters, artists and Wilmington's young effete elite a chance to Instagram their lives in full retro-glory at an address that says gentrified, but not too gentrified.

During its formative years, the area around Satellite was a center of World War II defense workers. South Front Apartments was known as Nesbitt Court and later turned from working-class to low-income housing. Satellite served Nesbitt Court as Lee's Self Service Grocery and Meat Store, a place where one could buy pickled eggs, a carton of smokes and a quart of beer.

Walk into Satellite today and instead of a deli counter, you'll find a bar stretching the length of the room. There are well over one hundred regional and craft beers to be had and it's something of a hophead holy place.

Through the week, hipsters and budding beer fans haunt the place, but on weekends, it's a riot of people. On Saturday afternoons, Satellite is quiet and airy, perfect for rummy, spades, or backgammon, but as day grinds into evening, it pulls outliers from Wilmington's various social scenes together. A couple of surfers. Some guy with a Great Dane. A bespectacled girl with a snake around her neck. Business types. The inevitable hipsters. Kids with their beleaguered parents. Single girls, married girls, guys in tank tops, musicians, film industry folk.

Sunday nights, it's as crowded outside as it is inside, and the regular thump and slide-swish of constant cornhole games gives the crowd a beat to follow. Tonight, the players are two couples, each well into their fourth PBR. The men give their manly advice — Let it go sooner, not so hard or it will slide off like the last time — loud enough for everyone to hear. The crowd presses close, talking and laughing and shouting and drinking their drinks. To their delight, the girlfriends sink two consecutive throws and the guys bite their tongues.

It's hot out and the plucky sound of the bluegrass musicians is tart and invigorating. Swift and sure footed, a pack of kids tears up via a path to the bar. Six of them race around, squealing, climbing drainpipes, blowing dandelions into each other's hair, balancing on landscaping beams and curbs,

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

but never getting into the street as adults who have no vested interest in any of this tiny tribe slide over to close any possible escape routes.

A stage whisper cuts through the din — "Brooke Shields is inside." Of course she'd be here, if she happened to be in town, that is. Maybe she heard the Original Sin Hard Cider is an incredibly refreshing $5/pint or that PBRs are only $2 or that the tallboys they serve here would fit her hand quite well.

Inside, it takes two songs to get close enough to order, then one more of being ignored by the overworked bartender before a pint of cider appears. Back outside, a friend sits on a stump talking to a gorgeous woman who looks suspiciously like Brooke Shields. No one seems to notice. Maybe it's the hat or downplayed black ensemble or the fact that she's posted up with a kid between her feet that makes her look like a satellite regular, like she wasn't once the fantasy du jour of at least two-thirds of the male population here. Two of the pack of daredevil dandelion-blowing kids are hers. You can see her intensity in one daughter's eyes; the other has her smile. She sips her beer beside her husband and revels in the anonymity.

As the ragtag bluegrass band picks their way through a song and parents dance with kids and kids dance with dogs, it's clear that there's an energy building here. Singles flirt over cornhole. Professors and students talk to each other and no one dies of embarrassment. Surfers talk breaks with bankers who used to be surfers. Writers, well, we're always off to the side, taking it in, watching, and scribbling notes, just studying the formation of constellations, decoding the shape of Wilmington to come.

Jason Frye is a travel writer and author of two forthcoming travel guides. He's a barbecue judge, outdoor enthusiast, poet, and lover of all things North Carolina.

The Carolina Yard Dog

He was purebred, and possibly pure fiction

By Bill Thompson

Several years ago I wrote about meeting a man in Brunswick County who had developed a unique breed of dog: the Carolina Yard Dog. I had not thought about the occasion or the dog again until I happened to run into the fellow at a convenience store in Supply the other day, and then I remembered the story.

A man drove up to put some air in the tires of his old blue pickup truck. I don't remember what model or year it was, but it had seen a lot of dirt-road miles. Grime covered the truck from one end to the other and someone had finger-written "bound for glory" on the passenger side of the cab.

The driver was much like the truck: covered with dirt and the victim of a lot of miles. His reddish-gray beard covered most of his face, but I could see the creases around his eyes. Those eyes didn't fit the rest of the man. His eyes seemed to sparkle, and the lines around them must have fought their way through his beard and on down to the grin that showed several teeth missing. Altogether, he presented a sort of amiable, if disheveled, appearance.

But it wasn't the man who got my attention so much as the dog in the back of his truck. No dog box for that canine; just a rope looped through his collar and the center of a spare tire. He didn't look like he needed any restraint, though. He was resting peacefully, stretched out with his head looking toward the stranger looking over the side.

He didn't look like any particular breed, although it was a hound of some kind. "Nice dog you got there. What kind is it?" I asked.

"That, my friend, is a one-hundred-percent purebred Carolina Yard Dog," the man replied. "Raised him from a pup. His mama and daddy both was champion Carolina Yard Dogs."

"Don't believe I've ever heard of a purebred Yard Dog," I said.

"Well, they're pretty rare, but my family has been breeding them for generations. We practice some selective breeding. Keep only the best for ourselves, and we're right particular about who we sell the rest of them to. Can't no ordinary person treat a Carolina Yard Dog like he's got to be treated."

"What makes them so special?" I asked.

"The main thing we look for is a good temperament. A good Yard Dog has got to take things slow and easy. We can't have no dog that's too energetic. We don't want him to go no faster than a walk, and he can't cover more than about a hundred feet without resting. A hundred feet is about the distance of our yard from the house to the road. That's how we come up with the name, you know.

"The next best trait we look for is easy keeping. Our dogs don't need worming or any kind of shots. And, above all, they are not the least bit particular about what they eat, and they don't eat much anyhow. A good Yard Dog is definitely a low-maintenance animal."

"What does this dog do? Does he hunt?" I asked.

"Lord, no! Why a turtle'd outrun him. A good Yard Dog is the best watchdog you can find. He don't appear vicious, though. In fact, when a stranger comes up in the yard, that dog will just look at him and stare him down. It usually makes the intruder so worried about what the dog is going to do, that the mystery of it will make the stranger leave rather than take a chance on what the dog might do."

"These must be very rare dogs. How many are there?" I asked.

"Very, very few," he replied. "They are so slow and lazy it's hard to get 'em to breed."

Then the man just laughed real hard and drove off in his dirty truck.

Bill Thompson is a speaker and author who lives just down the road, in nearby Hallsboro.

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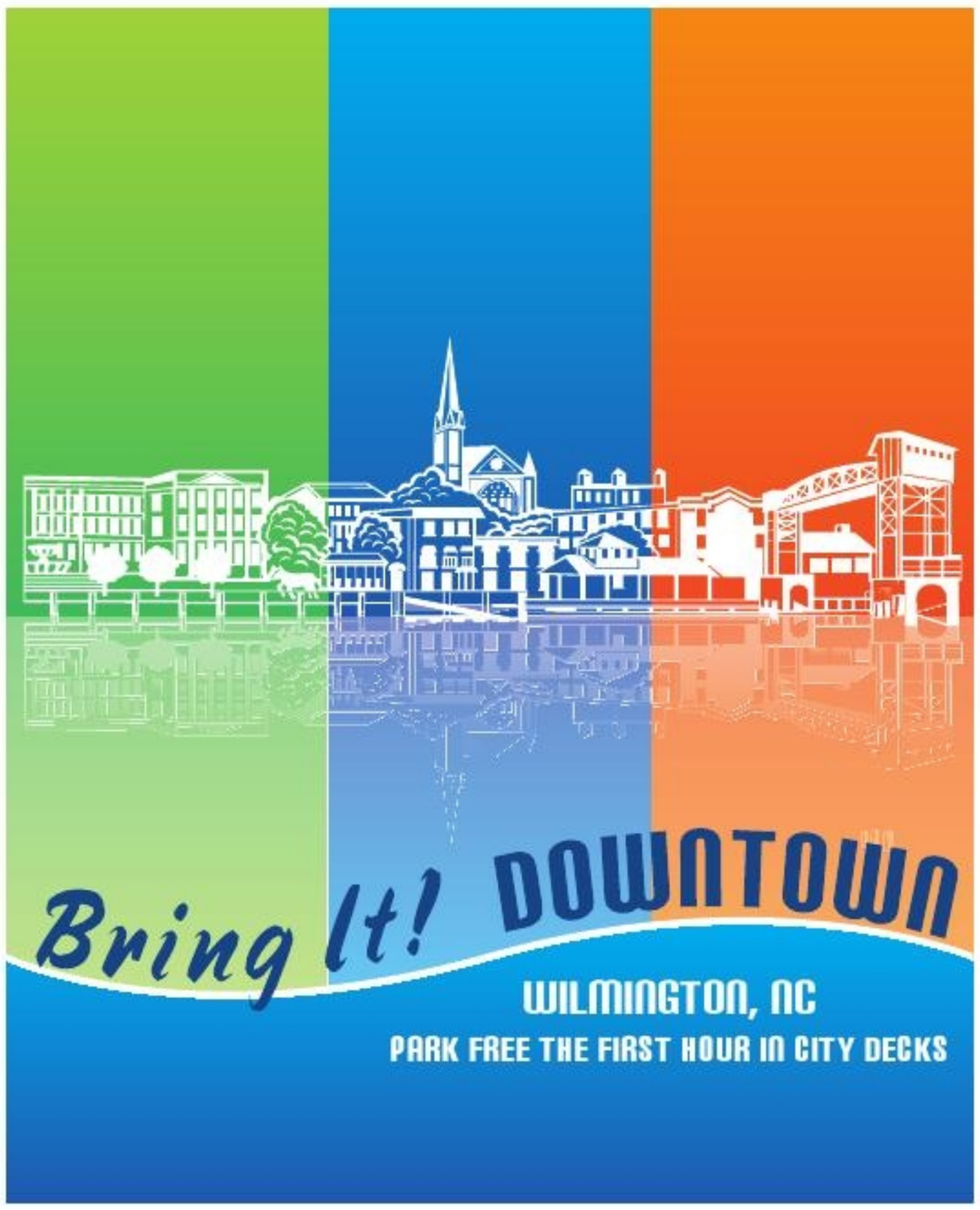

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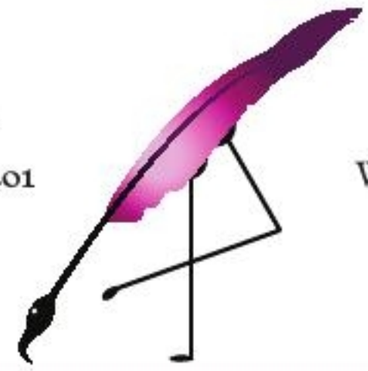

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Lee Crouch as a young boy preparing for a sailboat race. Wrightsville Beach, circa 1962.

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Eastern Screech-Owl

The tiny owl with the spooky shriek

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEBRA REGULA

By Susan Campbell

This time of year, an eerie trill or spooky shriek from out of the darkness might indicate the presence of an Eastern screech-owl.

Hopefully.

For such a small bird — roughly eight inches from talons to the top of its large, round head — the vocalizations of an Eastern screech-owl are remarkably loud. Territorial adults use a combination of screams, tremolos and long trills to advertise the boundaries of their home range. They inhabit forests and wooded areas throughout North Carolina, especially woodlands near streams, wetlands and marshes. In other words, our coastal habitat is a great place for them. And they live here year-round.

Eastern screech-owls are either dull gray or a rich rufous color. Dark splotches and vertical striping on the breast and belly provide excellent camouflage against tree bark, where they often roost during daylight hours. They may be sitting close to a tree trunk or peering out of a cavity, tufts of feathers on their heads creating an eared or horned appearance. As is the case with most raptors, females are larger than males and have higher pitched calls. Unless crows or flocks of songbirds signal the presence of an Eastern screech-owl with frenzied flight and raucous calling, rarely are these tiny owls seen.

This species is found widely throughout the eastern United States as well as along the Canadian border and in the easternmost parts of Mexico. Although they may stray outside their normal habitat during the breeding season, Eastern screech-owls are not migratory. These diminutive owls breed in the springtime. Pairs, which usually stay together for life, nest in cavities, utilizing old squirrel or woodpecker holes as well as larger bird boxes. They have been found in purple martin houses and often reside inside wood duck boxes. Of course, pairs readily take to boxes made to their exact specifications, (see link below for nest box plans). At night, while the female stays with the nest, her mate will hunt for the growing family.

Eastern screech-owls eat a wide variety of prey. While rodents make up the largest portion of their diet, they readily catch frogs, moths, beetles, crayfish and earthworms. They also feed on small birds — swallows and finches, for instance — and even the occasional bat. Their method is simple: sit-and-wait, pounce on the prey and then swallow it whole. Owl gizzards are specially adapted to digest the soft parts of the creatures they eat and then ball up the bones, fur and other indigestible bits into an oval mass, which they regurgitate. Favored roost sites or nest cavities can be found by locating piles of these masses (or pellets) on the forest floor.

Unfortunately, these birds often hunt along roadsides and are prone to being hit by cars when they swoop low over the pavement to grab a meal. Overall, though, Eastern screech-owls have adapted well to the changes Man has made to the landscape. In fact, urban screech-owls tend to be more successful than their suburban counterparts, likely due to several factors including fewer predators, more available prey and plenty of cavities on the landscape. So spend some time outside after dark and train your ears for the trill or tremolos of our Eastern screech-owl. No doubt there are one or two living in your neighborhood. These cute little birds are anything but scary once you get to know them.

Susan would love to receive your wildlife sightings and photos. Contact her by email at susan@ncaves.com, or by calling (910) 949-3207.

Home From the Sea

A statewide effort to bring the USS North Carolina *— the showboat of the US fleet — permanently home resulted in a memorable October Sunday — and some unplanned excitement*

HUGH MORTON PHOTO COURTESY BATTLESHIP NORTH CAROLINA.

By Susan Taylor Block

October marks the 76th anniversary of the Showboat's laying of the keel.

I was 9 years old when Wilmington native Hugh Morton launched the "Let's Bring the USS *North Carolina* Home" campaign. As a child, the closest I ever felt to military history was rolling down the mounds at Fort Fisher, and the only thing I knew about battleships came from watching dark, jerky bits of old World War II footage that aired on television in the 1950s. So, aware they were extremely noisy and could clobber a vessel their own size, it seemed odd to me that a battleship would come to town just to sit. It seemed a bit menacing, too, like a small cannon perched in a living room corner.

After discussing this with my beloved grandmother, a sixth-generation North Carolinian, she explained the history and the meaning behind it, then added, "And you should have a special interest in the battleship, because your great uncle, Talmadge Stone, helped install the guns." Actually, I should have known there would be some genealogical synapse. People all over America have family trees, but Southerners are keen to document them — and to hang ribbons of remembrance on every branch.

Some heavy-hitters endorsed Hugh Morton's campaign, including governors Luther Hodges and Terry Sanford, Skipper Bowles, Sam Ervin and JFK himself, but the original plea came from a Wilmington friend Morton knew from their mutual involvement in Jaycees. His name was James S. "Jimmy" Craig, and he learned, in 1958, that the Navy had decided to scrap the battleship. Outraged that a ship that earned fifteen battle stars during World War II would come to such an ignoble end, he began his own verbal battle.

The *North Carolina* was not just any battleship. The design was so sleek and "ultra-modern" that the ship was nicknamed "Showboat" from its inception at the New York Naval Shipyard in 1937. Of course it wasn't just built for show. *North Carolina* performed like an 80-million-pound water bull, participating in every major offensive Pacific battle. Craig remembered when the Lone Star State's USS *Texas* became the nation's first battleship memorial museum ship. He knew *North Carolina's* homecoming would bring pride to our state.

Jimmy Craig recruited the help of Governor Hodges, who effectively arrested the process. Mr. Craig, an advertising representative for WECT-TV, worked closely with Hugh Morton, aka Mr. North Carolina, who plodded through Eagles Island marshland to choose the ship's final resting place. Morton and Craig arranged free television time for live benefits featuring David Brinkley and Andy Griffith that aired on every station across the state.

Tragically, just eight days before the battleship arrived, Jimmy Craig was injured in an air crash at Bluethenthal Field. He had been invited to fly with paratroopers who were doing an air show demonstration so he could view the berth site from the air.

Local station WECT-TV televised the event live. According to Wayne

R. Jackson, a television reporter for the event, the plane crashed on take-off. Five people died. I did not see the crash on television, but I did see the smoky aftermath. It was traumatic. Craig died three weeks later at the Army Burn Unit at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Jimmy Craig was an everyman, a hero, and an accidental martyr for the S.O.S. (Save Our Ship) cause. The Paul Revere of the USS *North Carolina* campaign became the unwitting ship's last victim. Jimmy Craig's name stayed dear to us. Four years after his death, my grandmother introduced me to Mr. Craig's mother, and I felt as if I should curtsy.

Soon, school children were asked to donate ten cents, for which they would receive a free admission ticket to the ship. At least 700,000 students responded. Armed with my humble family connection and fresh knowledge that World War II was all about saving innocent people and keeping the USA strong, I happily gave a shiny silver dime to the cause. When my ticket arrived, I was amazed to see that it was good until 1965. Four years seemed like a very long time back then.

From 1947 until 1961, the Showboat sat silent in a Reserve fleet in Bayonne, New Jersey, until she began to make her way toward Wilmington. Fittingly, for a ship that had seen such danger, the final ocean voyage of the *North Carolina* was from Cape Hatteras, the "Graveyard of the Atlantic," to the old "Cape of Fear." Arrival had been scheduled for Sunday, October 1, but blinding rain and strong northeast winds thwarted plans and reminded local hurricane veterans that nature wins out.

News that the ship's arrival had been rescheduled for the following day thrilled me because it meant I would only have to endure half a piano lesson. Mother picked me up and she, my younger brother and I headed downtown. We finally found a parking place, then wedged ourselves into the large crowd gathered at the foot of Market Street.

Eleven tugboats eased the USS *North Carolina* up the Cape Fear River toward its permanent berth at Eagles Island. Edging into sight, the great ship commanded quiet admiration as grandiosity, patriotism and local pride began to take charge. No word but awe could describe what if felt like to view the enormity of our ship as she passed directly in front of us. At eye level, with a height of a 15-story building, a length of 729 feet, and a Panama Canal-tailored girth of 108 feet, *North Carolina* appeared to fill the river.

It was a magnificent experience, enhanced by music from the New Hanover High School band. They played military songs like "Anchors Aweigh," but also did a jazzy rendition of "Never on a Sunday," which caused chuckles to riffle through the crowd. Once the USS *North Carolina* was just past us, we headed for the car, but soon, and with great regret, I learned we had missed some real action that happened just one block from where we stood. While angling itself to make its final approach to the berth, a strong tide swept the battleship into a floating cement restaurant known as Fergus Ark that had permanent dockage at the foot of Princess Street.

Wilmington artist Claude Howell saw what was about to happen and warned proprietor Eldridge Fergus, who was standing on the stern of the Ark, looking agog. "Jump, Eldridge, jump," Howell bellowed in his drawling multi-syllabic way. Fergus leapt into the river just in time. An instant later, as Howell described it, there was "a crunching sound like that of crumpling paper."

An 80-million-pound ship does not have to hit hard to cause damage. The Ark had been ripped, tilted and torn, but Fergus would make swift work of repairs. Soon, the floating diner reopened, with the addition of a purple heart painted on its side. Business flourished.

Today when I look at the USS *North Carolina*, my thoughts return to what my grandmother taught me. The ship that was called "The World's Greatest Sea Weapon" and the brave men who served aboard it helped end atrocities, enhance the name of America, and improve conditions in the world. When the ship was dedicated on April 29, 1962, it became a memorial to every veteran in the state, but especially the 10,000 North Carolinians who lost their lives during World War II. It deserves a salute every time we pass it.

Susan Taylor Block is a regular contributor to Salt *magazine.*

Sweet Forbidden Places

Isolated by time and nature, these beautiful spots on the Cape Fear cry out for exploration — and appreciation

Price's Creek Lighthouse

By Virginia Holman

Forty years ago, when as a girl of 7 I discovered that I much preferred rambling in the outdoors to most other recreation, I took great delight in trespassing the abandoned homes, derelict fish camps, and boat junkyards of my small coastal town. These places held allure because they were forbidden, yes — but also because they were neglected and desolate. Each site had a unique silence, made resonate by those not present, and each place was gravid with history and secrets — a potent combination that is perhaps the essence of mystery. When I wandered through those places, alone or with my cousins, I felt both shock at the fact of my individual human insignificance and a keen longing to experience the many lives I could never live, even in the pages of a book.

Not much has changed. I find I am still drawn to places that people have long discarded. Here in the Cape Fear region I don't have to tramp through long fields of Queen Anne's lace or slog through marsh mud and a haze of mayflies to visit these enigmatic mementos of our past. In fact, I can view a few in a single day — as an excursion to a few of our less visited sites.

Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson

Just outside Wilmington on NC 133 South is the "ghost town" of Brunswick Town. I'd passed by the site entrance many times over the years as I drove between Wilmington and Southport, but had never explored the area until a couple of months ago. The entrance road to Brunswick Town runs well over a mile and meanders past a spectacular cypress swamp. It would appear the perfect secluded spot to launch a rowboat with your sweetheart were it not for ample Do Not Feed The Alligators signage among the lily-pads. Brunswick Town has long been dwarfed as a tourist draw by the ornate and currently-closed-to-the-public Orton Plantation. I visit for two hours on a clear Saturday morning, a beautiful day. Only six other tourists are on the premises.

The property of Brunswick Town is vast, about 350 acres, and offers visitors a glimpse of how the Cape Fear region looked over 300 years ago. Ancient live oaks abound along the extensive riverfront bluffs, draped in silvered moss. Another mystery: How have they managed to withstand the storms and floods? It is also impossible to visit the site and not consider those who have stood on its banks over the centuries: Cape Fear Indians (who named the area Necoes), pre-Revolutionary colonists (who harvested the longleaf pine for pitch and tar, which was essential to protect the wooden ships of the Royal Navy), and Civil War soldiers (who later manned the cannons along the long riverfront battery, and who renamed the site Fort Anderson).

Brunswick Town is a fascinating place with literally layer upon layer of history. Here, the ruins of pre-Revolutionary War houses share the same space as Civil War fortifications. Most stunning are the remnants of Brunswick Town's St. Philip's Anglican Church. The roof, doors and windows were destroyed during a fire in 1760, shortly after the church was completed, and again in 1776 when it was burned by the British. The remaining structure

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIRGINIA HOLMAN

Brunswick Town's St. Philip's Anglican Church

was later used to house the Confederate dead. Miraculously, the four brick walls of the church still stand, though pocked by Civil War cannon balls. As I view the church, I find myself moved to witness a bird flit through one glassless arched window housing, sail through the church interior, and exit out another window housing. Here in Brunswick Town, you get the sense that each visitor to these ruins is also just passing through.

Price's Creek Lighthouse

Leaving Brunswick Town, I drive to Southport, enjoy a crab cake at the Provision Company, and hop the ferry to Fort Fisher. Just as the ferry departs, I can see Price's Creek Lighthouse off the port side.

This twenty-foot-tall, round red brick lighthouse was built in 1849 and is the last remaining Civil War-era beacon on the Cape Fear River. The Price's Creek Lighthouse appears modest by lighthouse standards. That's because six of the eight beacons erected along the Cape Fear in 1848 were used as range finders to safely guide ships upriver. At Price's Creek, one lighthouse was 20 feet tall, and its mate, located about 800 feet upriver, was 35 feet tall (beneath it was the lighthouse keeper's dwelling). When a ship's captain could "line up the beacons," that is, view the light of the taller lighthouse above the light of the shorter lighthouse, he knew he was in the range of safely navigable waters.

As the war dragged on, the Fresnel lenses atop the lighthouses were removed by Confederate authorities when oil supplies ran out, and toward the end of the war all but the two Price's Creek lighthouses were destroyed to prevent the beacons' use by Union forces.

Hanson Kelly Ruark of Southport was the keeper of the beacons at Price's Creek when the Civil War began. His daughter, Mary Catherine Ruark, is said to have viewed the battles at Fort Fisher from atop one of the Price's Creek range lights. It must have been something to see. A storm eventually claimed the keeper's lighthouse, and the remaining rubble was used by residents in the rebuilding effort.

The now derelict Price's Creek lighthouse is located on property owned by Archer Daniels Midland and is not open to the public. However, the lighthouse is easily viewed from the Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry.

Fort Fisher Hermit's Bunker

Though many people have heard of Robert Harrill, aka the Fort Fisher hermit, few make the trek to the hermit's home, a small World War II-era bunker. It's easy enough to access, and a lovely stroll on a crisp fall afternoon. Once I disembark from the ferry, I drive a half-mile down the road to the Fort Fisher State Recreation Area. Over to the right, just across the four-wheel-drive access to the park, is a somewhat obscured trail to the hermit's bunker. It's a lovely path: the entrance is a canopy of bushes, vines, and small live oak. Several small footbridges allow visitors to cross the saltwater creeks. Eventually the trail leads me to the beach and then across several long wooden bridges that span a wide expanse of marsh. Ibis roost in a distant tree. Once I've traveled about a mile, I see a small opening to my right, and a low cinderblock structure. This was Mr. Harrill's modest home during everything from brutal heat waves to hurricanes.

The facts leading up to Mr. Harrill's tenure as the Fort Fisher hermit are limited. He lived in the North Carolina Piedmont, and he was unable to hold on to steady work and his marriage. When his wife left him and his eldest son committed suicide, he resided for a time in a psychiatric hospital in Morganton before hitchhiking to Carolina Beach at age 62. He soon set up residence in this abandoned bunker. He subsisted for a time off the marsh. As people heard of the hermit, many visited, trading food, money and supplies for his company and unique self-sufficient philosophy, which he dubbed The School of Common Sense. Before long, the "hermit" was one of the region's biggest tourist attractions, and Harrill had found his place in the world. In 1964, he claimed to have had more than 60,000 visitors. In 1972, Harrill was found dead in his bunker, the victim of an unsolved fatal assault. He's buried in the Newton Graveyard off River Road. His epitaph is as simple as his life was complex. It reads: "The Fort Fisher Hermit. He made people think."

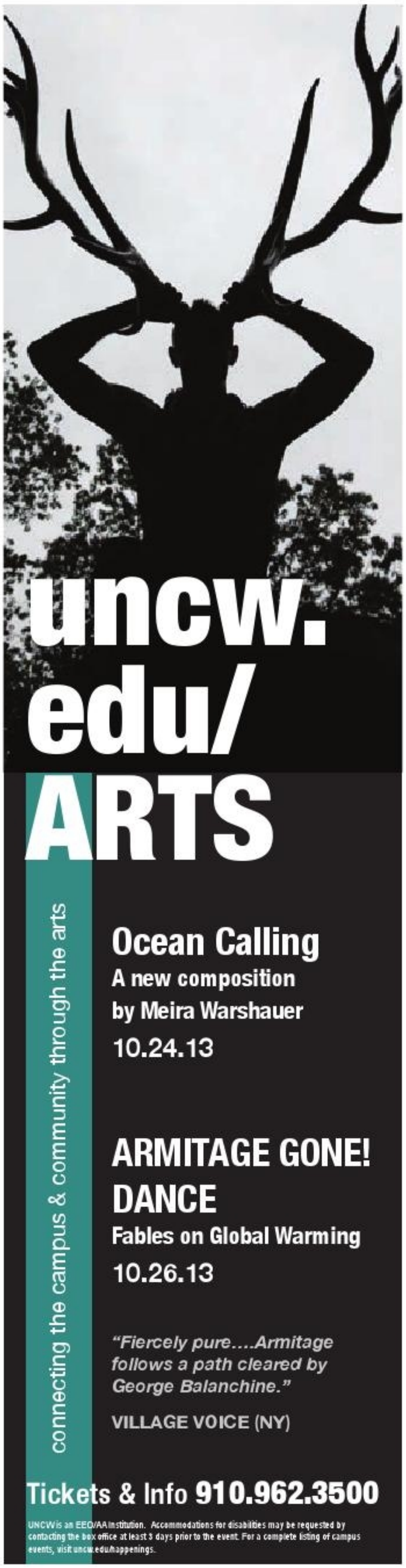
Want to visit?

Brunswick Town, 8884 St. Philip's Road Southeast , Winnabow, North Carolina, 28479
Info: (910) 371-6613 or brunswick@ncdcr.gov
Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Price's Creek Lighthouse is best viewed by ferry.
For the Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry schedule visit www.ncdot.gov/ferry or call (910) 457-6942
The Southport ferry is located at 1650 Ferry Road Southeast, Southport, North Carolina 28461.
The Fort Fisher ferry is located at 2422 South Fort Fisher Boulevard, Kure Beach, North Carolina , 28449.

The path to the Fort Fisher hermit's bunker is open during the Fort Fisher State Recreation Area's hours: November through February, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.; March through May, September, October, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.; June through August, 8 a.m. – 9 p.m. Closed Christmas Day
Location: 1000 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach, North Carolina 28449
Info: (910) 458-5798 or fort.fisher@ncparks.gov

Virginia Holman teaches creative writing at UNC Wilmington, and kayaks the ocean, rivers and flatwater year-round.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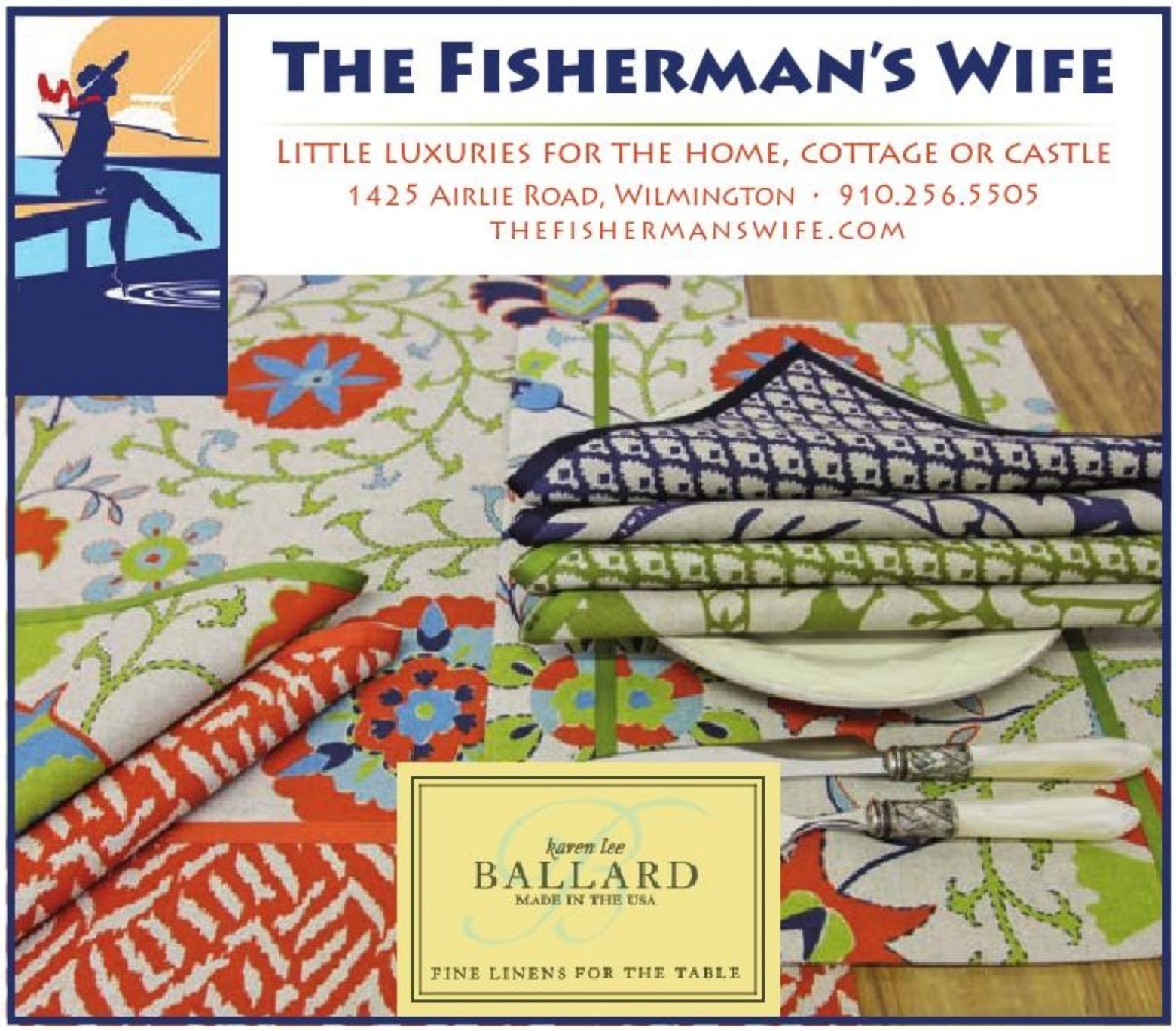
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for Kristin Bock

Shadows stretch further, even
the short grass is the dark puzzle

box of the woods down the road.
Crows gather earlier each morning.

Soon, they will sleep in my ear,
black pinions curled in quiet,

anvil beaks to the pink canal. Soon,
they will be the first to wake me,

and when I stand, back turned
to sunrise, my shadow — a giant

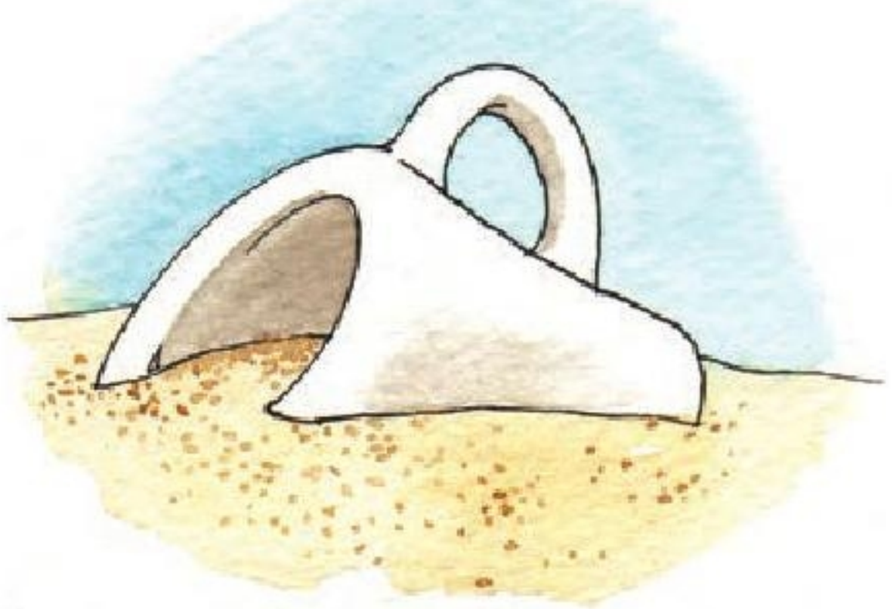
capable of anything — doesn't quite
resemble me. What am I

becoming?

– Daniel Nathan Terry

Remembering Hazel

STORY AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRY BLAIR



I was born on May 2, 1945, at James Walker Memorial Hospital. At the time, my parents were living in Carolina Beach in a duplex apartment next to Carolina Beach Lake. My father was one of the Liberty Ship workmen. His job was installing galleys. Many years later, this constant contact with asbestos would kill him. But that's another story.

The first eight years of my life were spent moving from town to town – wherever my father's new, post war job would take us. But then, in my ninth summer, we moved back to Wilmington. It was a great place and a great time to be 9.

This was a time when most mothers of small children didn't work outside the home. My mother was occupied each day with cooking, cleaning and caring for my new baby sister, so I was pretty much, as they say, free as a bird; and also as they say, happy as a clam at high tide.

We had a nice ground-floor apartment in the Sunset Park neighborhood, just off Carolina Beach Road. There were tons of kids, and unlimited ways to have fun.

This was before video games. Heck, television was a novelty that didn't much interest me except for *Disneyland* on Sunday night, or maybe some stuff on Saturday morning. "Having fun" meant being outdoors – building race cars out of scrap lumber and whatever wheels we could scrounge up, playing cowboys and Indians in the acres of sand and scrub pines next to the apartments, building forts, shooting cap guns, flying kites, playing marbles, climbing trees and learning yo-yo tricks. Polio was beat. God was added to the Pledge of Allegiance. A slick-haired kid named Elvis was a new voice on the radio. It felt as though nothing bad would ever happen again.

Hurricanes start as hot wind over the Sahara Desert. Moving west, they pick up moisture when they reach the Atlantic. Over the equator, they don't know whether to rotate clockwise or counter-clockwise, so they do neither, and eventually die. But some make it to the Caribbean and intensify over the warm water. On October 5, 1954, an unnamed storm formed over the Windward Islands. No one in Wilmington, Wrightsville, Carolina or Kure Beach knew about this. No one in Southport or Long Beach had a clue that in ten days the most destructive hurricane to ever hit North Carolina would devastate our coast.

Sunset Park Elementary, then a brand new school, was an easy walk of about six blocks from my front door. It was a single-story contemporary building situated on a shady lot full of tall pines and live oaks draped in Spanish moss. When school started, I made my way to my fourth-grade classroom. It smelled of fresh paint and new books. The windows were open to let in a cool breeze. I knew I was going to like it there. Since we had moved to Wilmington that summer, I had already made friends with three or four of the kids in my class. Adjusting to my new school wasn't a problem. I liked it about as much as a 9-year-old boy can like any school. It wasn't horrible by any means. In fact, it was pretty nice.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF NORTH CAROLINA

Carolina Beach, one month after Hurricane Hazel

The way North Carolina juts out into the Atlantic Ocean – off Cape Hatteras it's only around 60 miles to the Gulf Stream – makes the coast an easy target for hurricanes. And the people of the lower Cape Fear had seen several over the years. Before 1954, a typical hurricane meant "a near miss." It might rain for a few days, the wind might damage a handful of beach house roofs, and, occasionally, there might be minor flooding from storm surge. So when word of another hurricane chasing the heels of "Carol" and "Edna" reached Wilmington, no one was overly concerned. Sure, hurricanes were respected, but they weren't necessarily feared. This new one, "Hazel," was expected to weaken and bring, at most, heavy rain to the Florida or south Georgia coastal region. Every kid in Wilmington went about his or her life without a care in the world.

For some reason, Columbus Day, October 12, was a fairly big deal in Wilmington. And Sunset Park Elementary always had a Columbus Day celebration of some kind. That year it was decided the fourth-graders would present a short play depicting Columbus landing in the New World. Although I wasn't the least bit interested, I was picked to be Columbus. Upon learning that all I had to say was, "I claim this land in the name of Queen Isabella of Spain!", however, I felt like I could handle it.

On Monday, October 11, Hazel hit Haiti as a Category 2 hurricane. If the same, weakening storm had hit the Carolina coast, it would have been considered an inconvenience. In an unprepared and near-primitive Haiti, on the other hand, 1,000 men, women and children lost their lives. One hundred thousand more were left homeless. Like Columbus, 500 years earlier, Hazel had made landfall in Hispaniola with devastating consequences.

Tuesday morning at Sunset Park Elementary, teachers and play participants were setting the stage and putting on costumes in the gymna-café-torium. I had to wear a floppy purple velvet ladies' hat with a plume, a large red coat over a plain white shirt with a collar, khaki pants stuffed into knee-high socks, and hilariously incongruous black high-top Keds. For the first of many times to come, I felt ridiculous. As my cohorts and I "came ashore" brandishing swords, pistols and what resembled a Royal Flag of Spain, we approached a "forest" of five-foot pine saplings held up by little piles of bricks. Behind these trees, four or five giggling and plainly visible Indians were "hiding." Whatever, I thought. Let's just get this over with.

There was a small wooden stage in the gymna-café-torium, maybe six inches higher than the linoleum floor, but no curtain. With the rest of the school seated out in front of us, we just walked in and took our places. I tried to hide my ridiculous self behind the gigantic flag to no avail. We stood there red-faced and purple-hatted while a kid from another class read the Columbus story out loud. As we waited, a few of the Indians got a little restless and started punching one another behind the puny little pine trees. At this point I forgot my lines, or rather, my line. When the kid finished reading, my teacher nodded to me, and I slammed the end of the flagstick into the stage as hard as I could. "I claim this land in the name of Queen Bella of Spain!" I yelled. At this point, the aforementioned Indians knocked over a tree. To the delight of the crowd, this created a domino effect. Within seconds, every pathetic pine tree had toppled over. Needless to say, we were herded off the stage and back to our room while the gymna-café-torium erupted with the sounds of hoots and whistles. I would never forget this, I swore. And then I started laughing too.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF NORTH CA

Lumina, Wrightsville Beach,
one month after hurricane Hazel

Hazel moved northwest of Haiti and intensified. It turned north on Thursday, and the weather service advised coastal communities that the hurricane would follow the Gulf Stream north and probably stay offshore.

But Hazel was unpredictable and crazy. It grew stronger, and in the early morning darkness of Friday, October 15, it veered left and headed straight for Long Beach as a violent Category 4 hurricane. With little of the advance notices we have today, most people in the lower Cape Fear had no time to evacuate inland. They were forced to tough out the storm, hoping for the best, but bracing for the worst.

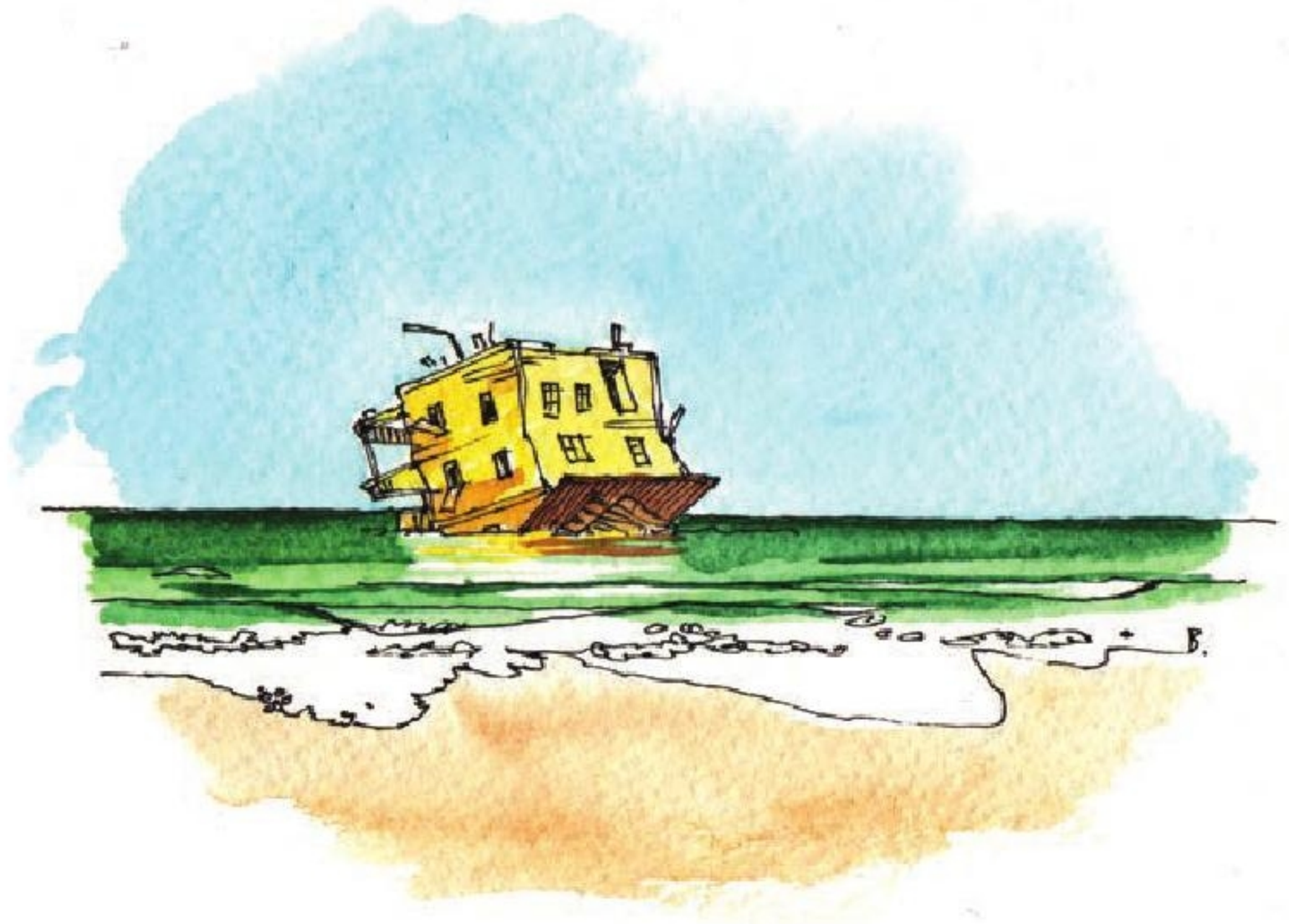
Hazel came roaring ashore just as the highest high tide of the year occurred. Suddenly, eighteen feet of swirling, foaming-at-the-mouth ocean water came crashing through the first line of dunes and into Long Beach and Southport.

That morning, awakened by the roar of the storm, I looked out a back window of our brick apartment and watched torrential rain crashing into the rattling panes of the window like waves, the wind howling and screaming like a beast. In the play area out back, I could barely make out the swings, rubber seats and chains whipping around crazily. There was no power, the outside world was coming apart, but we were all home and together and safe, watching in silence. Tall pines in our backyard swayed back and forth. As the wind intensified, shingles began flying off roofs. All around us, giant pines began crashing to the ground in spectacular violence. Just as the stage at Sunset Elementary had been ingloriously littered with little stick-like pine saplings three days earlier, our yard, our neighborhood, our city, and all of the lower Cape Fear was littered with toppled trees.

National Guard troops patrolled the beaches that weekend, hoping to

Breakers Hotel after Hazel

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF NORTH CAROLINA



stop "looters." Up until then, I had never heard that term. On Sunday morning my father and I drove down to Carolina and Kure Beach. We couldn't drive very far because the beach road was destroyed. What remained were chunks and slabs of asphalt, either covered in sand or jutting up at crazy angles. Houses were upside down in the surf. As we walked along the littered beach, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. The beachfront looked like a huge pile of trash. Here was a roof on the ground, with no house underneath it; there was another house – torn in two – the second floor bathroom exposed. The toilet looked as if it were about to fall out; I remember the billowing shower curtain, which had smiling sea horses on it. The pier (I don't remember which one) was gone except for about fifty feet of twisted-up wood, and the pier house was reduced to a pile of lumber. Most of the first dune line had been relocated a hundred or more feet inland, partially covering other houses and cars in the sand. Nearly everything was torn to bits. But it was a beautiful sunny day. And if you closed your eyes, all you could hear were the sounds of the gulls and the surf.

We had walked out from our car about as far as my father wanted to go when I noticed a coffee cup lying near my feet. It was a heavy white china cup, like they have in diners. It wasn't scratched or chipped, and it was clean, like someone had washed it that morning. I stuffed it into my jacket pocket and wondered if this made me a "looter." No one saw me do it, but that didn't change my uneasiness. I don't know why I didn't put it back. I guess I just wanted a souvenir.

The following week we learned that Hazel had killed nineteen people in North Carolina and injured hundreds. Fifteen thousand homes had been destroyed. Nearly 40,000 homes sustained major damage. As Hazel traveled north, it didn't weaken over land as most hurricanes do, but stayed powerful, tearing a path miles wide even into Canada. In Toronto, fifty bridges were washed away, along with hundreds of homes. The death toll in Canada reached 81, and by current standards, the storm caused more than a billion dollars in damage.

That winter, my father's job required us to move again, this time to Charlotte. After another year we moved to South Boston, Virginia. We lived there for about a year and a half before finally settling in Greensboro. Wherever we were, we always came back to Wilmington a couple of times a year, staying at Kure Beach. I still come down now, usually to sit on the pier and pretend to fish. Sometimes my grandson, Hudson, sits with me.

For the people of eastern North Carolina, Hurricane Hazel was one of those life-defining events – and for me, one day out of sixty-eight years that can never be forgotten. I've survived many "hurricanes" since then, some more personal than others. And they all had women's names. But that's another story.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF NORTH CAROLINA

Wrightsville Beach,
one month after Hurricane Hazel,

The Importance of Being *Mannersome*

By Celia Rivenbark

It's not that people in other parts of the country aren't perfectly well-mannered. I suppose. It's just that when you see an outburst of etiquette somewhere outside the South, you may find that you involuntarily stop and stare, as if you had just seen a trained chicken pecking out four quarters for a dollar at the county fair. Which I have seen and, yes, I stared for a great while.

Yes, of course manners are important in any civilized society and parts of the Northeast, but, really, let's be honest. The South is home to the consistently "best mannered" cities. Typically topping the list is Charleston, where even the horses are polite enough to poop into sacks attached ever so discreetly to their bottoms. They don't even complain. Because they are Southern horses and it is simply untoward to whine about life's circumstances. No. The Southern way is to let whoever attach whatever to wherever and simply carry on.

The people do OK, too. In Charleston, Savannah, Nashville and Dallas, I have enjoyed audacious displays of decency that demonstrate how wonderfully well-mannered we can be.

Doors are opened, pleasantries are exchanged, and, my very favorite throw-back behavior: Gentlemen rise to their feet when a lady approaches. Like to give me goose bumps.

Of course, good manners exist and thrive outside the big Southern cities. At a dinner party here in Wilmington just the other night, I watched another woman's husband take pains to seat all the women at the table before taking his own seat.

"Why can't you be more like that?" I asked my own precious "Duh Hubby." Sadly, though mannersome in many areas, Duh is too easily distracted by the lure of a relish tray and has forgotten everything else swirling about him. His mother, a fine Southern woman, would be chagrined to hear this, by the way.

When I was not even tall enough to pull myself into a chair at my grandmother's oilcloth-covered kitchen table, she sat waiting, with pens and paper, to supervise my chubby fingers as I scrawled out a proper thank you note for a birthday gift.

"Hurry up!" she might say as I got distracted by an episode of *The Jetsons* playing on the TV behind her. "We have to get this in the mail today."

Well, of course. I had actually received the gift a whole day earlier.

I'm not saying that this scene wouldn't happen outside the South . . . OK, maybe I am saying that.

Good manners is as much a part of being a Southerner as (old school) cropping tobacco to make money for school clothes or (newfangled) having a go-to recipe for pickled shrimp to take to the tailgate party.

Speaking of that, I haven't had the privilege of actually attending a game at The Grove, that most famous of football venues at venerable Ole Miss, but my precious and darling niece, Lucy, has and she reports that it's all true. The "tailgaters" actually have china and sterling and tablecloths and, bless God, chandeliers suspended from the tops of their tents. I swooned a bit when she told me that last one. Where else but in the South would you find such a proper pre-game celebration for a football game?

Face it; Southerners are just a little bit "touched" when it comes to holding on to the niceties in life.

I feel that it's important to note that all of this manners talk isn't about haves and have nots. Sure, the chandelier people are possibly "1 percenters" but everyone knows that good manners have nothing to do with income and everything to do with how you are raised.

We were poor country critters growing up but we were poor, polite country critters.

At the heart of it all, Southerners understand that good manners have far less to do with finger bowls and folderol and much more to do with simply not "acting ugly" or "being ill." We are taught, from the cradle, to "straighten up and fly right." This flying right part includes a hefty portion of "please" and "thank you" and plenty of "sir" and "ma'am" although this last one tends to make non-Southerners a tad jumpy.

"I wish that little boy wouldn't call me 'ma'am,'" says my Yankee friend of her very Southern country neighbor. "Makes me feel like an old lady."

I try to explain that this is a child who has been raised in the traditional Southern way and he means no offense. I assure her that I would be just as horrified if the self-same child called me by my first name. The thought of it makes me reach wildly about for that Southern staple. No, not smelling salts – bourbon, of course.

A last word on Southerners and manners before I must go prepare a proper funeral casserole for a dear friend who lost his brother. And here it is: Four days ago, I had an altercation at the Food Lion. A slender fellow of about 40 or so, all tatted up with ladies' breasts on his elbows, rudely pushed his buggy in front of mine to break in line.

"Excuse me, but you just broke in front of me," I said, thinking that perhaps someone whose idea of high fashion was breasts that wrinkled all up when he put his arms down had been distracted and didn't realize his affront.

He whirled around and gave me a horridly mean look. His Totino's pizza must have been puddling a bit.

"Why you in such a hurry?" he asked. He was from the Midwest. I'm just saying. It was the accent.

"I'm not, but it's rude to do what you did," I said. Again, where was the damn bourbon?

"Well," he said, slowly, as though the thoughts were being beamed to him from a previous meeting with his Mensa group. "Seems to me it's rude of you to correct me."

Y'all, I had no words. No words.

And sometimes, perhaps most of the time, that is the correct Southern response.

One of my favorite comedians, the great Southerner Ron White, famously reminds us that "You can't fix stupid." So all we can do, as Southerners, is try to plant a tiny mustard seed of thought so that, next time, the hooligan might think twice before behaving badly.

That's another thing about us Southerners. We live to serve and to brighten the darkest corners of the universe. You can thank us for that. It would be entirely appropriate.

Photograph by Ned Leary

Chapter 1: Check-Splitting

Who had the gorgonzola crumbles, and should we really care?

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF YOU DON'T SWEAT MUCH FOR A FAT GIRL
CELIA RIVENBARK
rude bitches make me tired
slightly profane and entirely logical answers to modern etiquette dilemmas

By Celia Rivenbark

My friend Gray and I have often chuckled at the memory of how our mothers and grandmothers would agonize over splitting the check following the conclusion of a ladies' lunch on the town. Finally, at some point, one of the ladies would say to one member of the group, "Since you drove, we'll pay the tip."

Gray and I have been friends for three decades, ever since we met on the job at a daily newspaper where she was a photographer and I wrote feature stories about mules being born and the like. It's amazing that we were able to get jobs even though we were clearly very young children thirty years ago. Practically embryos. Anywho, it goes without saying that we have eaten many, many meals together in all kinds of restaurants and with all kinds of people over the years.

Because this is such a treasured bond between us, as soon as the check comes, one of us will chuckle and say to the other: "Since you drove . . ."

Maybe you have to be there.

The point is, we know that dividing the check at the restaurant can bring out all sorts of unintentionally rude behavior. At the heart of this sort of accidental etiquette breach is that it is ever so tacky to ever discuss money in public. It just is.

And while offering to pay the tip because gas was purchased by one of the members of the party is, on the face of it, a nice gesture, it only serves to muddy the waters.

How far must we carry this? As I write this, gas is about $3.44 a gallon in my hometown. If I take two friends to lunch downtown on our lovely riverfront, I've used no more than $1.10 in gas to pick them up.

This is less than the cost of a glass of sweet tea these days, so really, must we make it an issue? Should I point out that, because I drove, the rest of the lunch party owes me about one-fourth of the Caribbean Fudge Pie that I am, too, ordering even though my ass is spilling over either side of my chair.

No.

But still, in some quarters, you will hear all sorts of reasons why someone should pay a smaller percentage (or a higher one!) of the check when it arrives.

This is something that makes the server crazy. Hasn't she already been sufficiently inconvenienced by your insistence that the check be split six ways and that approximately one and a half of you are going in together to pay for the seventh woman's bill because it's her birthday?

Where are my smelling salts?

Question: We go out to dinner about once a month on a Saturday night with two couples who live in our cul-de-sac. We really like everything about these couples except for the fact that they drink very expensive wines with dinner and my husband and I are teetotalers. When the bill arrives, you guessed it, they always split it three ways even though we just ordered chicken cutlets and water!

Okay, you guessed it: I don't need my smelling salts anymore; I need a very dry Grey Goose martini as big as my head.

Ahh. There. Much better. Now, where were we? Oh, yes. You and your lushy fun friends sticking you with the wine bill . . .

First of all, let the record show that your couple-friends are assholes. Just because you share a driveway with someone doesn't mean that they should be your dinner companions. And, not to put too fine a point on this, but you and your husband sound like you'd be happier with your own kind. I mean, who the hell goes out to eat and orders a chicken cutlet and water on a Saturday night? I mean besides Garrison Keillor. For Christ's sake, it's *Saturday night*. Live a little — get the osso bucco. Look it up.

I'm sorry. I don't for an instant mean to imply that just because you don't drink, you're no fun. I just want to come right out and say it: You're No Fun.

Assuming that you really do want to continue this pitiful dinner charade for your own weird reasons (swapping, perhaps?) I will answer your question.

You're going to have to speak up. Yes! Crazy and radical, I know! You're going to actually form the sentence in your empty noggin, feel the words in your mouth, and then hear them hang on the air.

Here's what you say:

"Roscoe and I didn't have wine, so y'all can split that and leave us out of it."

Man, oh, man, how I'd love to be a fly on the wall when that happens. Sorry. I was assuming this was a Denny's, but then I remembered the "fine wine" thing.

Their jaws will drop and they'll be shocked that, after many months of sticking you with a third of the fancy wine you didn't drink, the metaphorical scales have fallen from your eyes. Crappidy-doo-dah. Game over.

You see, they've been wondering what is wrong with you for all this time anyway. Are you so desperate for friends that you have to buy them? Because that's what you're doing every time you meekly fork over your credit card for your third of the bill. We're done here.

Almost . . .

Is there anything more agonizing than hearing a humiliating recitation of everything you've eaten by the number-crunching weirdo in your party?

"Madge, you had the arugula-beet salad, but you added on the gorgonzola crumbles for a dollar seventy- five, so . . . your share comes to . . ."

It is just such a terrible end to what could have been a lovely lunch or dinner. To hear your every lamb lollipop recounted (two at $11.95 each . . .) is simply horrifying.

The rule is simple: separate checks if appropriate (that means a party of six or fewer) and, for larger groups, a commitment to accepting that the bill should be split evenly.

There's often an outlier, of course. There's the pale friend who must have everything "gluten- free" or she will double over and collapse in a tower of her own shit mid-meal. This is always such a downer for the rest of the table. Maybe you could ask her to sit elsewhere? Like Indiana?

While we're still in the restaurant, so to speak, let's take a moment to remind one another that the waiter is there to do a job, not to hear about your "gastric bypass," "lactose intolerance," "gastroesophageal reflux," "homoerotica fantasies," and the like.

He or she also doesn't need to hear that if he accidentally gives you caffeinated coffee, your heart will fly out of your chest and sit on the table, thumping away, while all you and your lunch companions can do is watch until it finally, mercifully, stops.

Here's a tip: They don't care about your coffee preference. They asked you only because you expected it. The truth is, you'll get decaf if it's convenient, and if it's not, well, that's a mighty fine-looking aorta you got there.

Remember that it's important to tip generously, especially if you ever plan to return. Servers remember the cheap creep that ran 'em ragged and left a cool ten-spot for a hundred-dollar meal. You know who you are. For the love of Bobby Flay, tip for good service, tip for lousy service, just tip. Some of y'all can be pretty demanding.

Example: "We need more bread. And when you get back, I'm going to think up a few other things we need, but I'm only going to list them one at a time so you have to make a bunch of trips."

Just remember: These servers can do awful things to your food right before it comes out. Awful things.

That's Not a Salad Fork, You Stupid Bitch

A lot of people get confused when they're in a nice restaurant and there are, like, a million forks surrounding their plates.

There's no reason to fret. Generally speaking, silver is placed in the order of its use, so you pick up the piece on the outside first. See? That wasn't so hard, was it?

When you've finished eating (or, as we say in the South, "had a sufficiency"), avoid announcing this by saying, loudly, "Damn, I'm stuffed!" or worse, "I'm chewin' high." There's no need to announce the state of your stomach. No one is interested, and the notion that you need to give alerts — as though, if you lifted your shirt, a fuel gauge just like your car has would be revealed with a wand wavering between E and F — is truly off-putting. Along these lines, never, ever burp and then say "Yay! Room for more!"

That said, when you're finished, really finished, not just talking about how full you are and continuing to shovel it in, place your fork on your plate, prongs down, beside your knife with the blade facing the fork. I am, too, serious. Good table etiquette is all that separates us from Kardashians — er, savages.

Some other tips . . . Always break bread with your fingers; never cut it with a knife. The bread knife is just for buttering and is also dreadfully unhandy for stabbing intruders; trust me.

A word about artichokes: Don't ever order them. Nobody looks good sucking on leaves. Not even a koala bear, and damn sure not you.

Know your limits: Don't order lobster, tails-on shrimp, Cornish game hen, and so forth, in a nice restaurant. You're going to look like a doofus no matter how hard you try not to, and it honestly doesn't help when you insist "I eat this shit all the time. Really." Ditto ordering something you don't know how to pronounce.

Good: "French onion soup."

Bad: "Duck cawn-fit."

A word about finger bowls: Okay, don't freak out when you see one for the first time, Gomer. And don't take a bath in it, either. Just dab the tips of your fingers in the bowl, and for the love of God, don't try to make a joke by also dabbing at your underarms and crotch.

Okay, maybe the underarms. That's actually pretty funny sometimes.

Don't talk with your mouth full. Don't talk with your mouth full. Don't talk with your mouth full.

Now. Since you drove . . .

Duplin County native Celia Rivenbark is a nationally syndicated humor columnist and best-selling author. Her latest book, Rude Bitches Make Me Tired, *from which chapter one excerpted, will be available in bookstores everywhere on October 22.* *Copyright © 2013 by the author and reprinted by permission of St. Martin's Press, LLC.*

These Hallowed Grounds

Oakdale Cemetery

By Ashley Wahl · Photographs by Mark Steelman

Beneath a canopy of gnarled oaks, twisted branches outstretched as if poised to nurture, weathered marble and granite memorials stand tall against a gently rolling landscape, the grassy earth dappled with golden-soft morning light.

Oakdale Cemetery is a garden of wonder. One half-mile from the intersection of Market and Fifteenth Street, this hundred-acre Eden retains the rustic beauty and reverence that the citizens of Wilmington helped create when they established these burial grounds in 1852. Long before public parks and gardens, families gathered here, on the outskirts of the city, to celebrate the lives of the deceased. Sons and daughters planted native flora, installed benches, framed their lots with iron fences, etched their names in stone. Together, they built a community — and began shaping Oakdale into one of the most resplendent rural cemeteries in the South.

Come spring, flowering dogwood and azalea dazzle, but Oakdale blooms with every season. Camellias. Redbuds. Gardenias. Towering Southern magnolias. Monuments are equally stunning.

Visit today and discover that nature and history are harmoniously intertwined. Iron fences are embraced by the trunks of ancient trees. Stone markers shaped like tree trunks blend in with the surrounding landscape. Butterflies brush past the cheeks of angel statuary. Birdsong resounds.

"This is the only place I've ever seen a flock of bluebirds," says Oakdale Superintendent Eric Kozen. "Here, I've seen as many as twenty to thirty strong."

Oakdale is alive with stories. Inscriptions offer glimpses into the lives of the dead: Captain William A. Ellerbrook, for instance, was buried with his faithful dog, Boss.

A simple plaque announces the burial site of nearly 1,800 yellow fever victims, where thousands of daffodils will bloom in late February.

Pennies line the grave of Confederate spy Rose O'Neal Greenhow. Several people of stature are buried here, "but each and every one of us is an important part of this community," says Kozen, speaking as though the dead and the living coexist.

Meandering pathways beckon. Pay reverence to the Confederate dead. Pray for the vagrants in the potter's field. Add rocks to the tombstones in the Hebrew Cemetery.

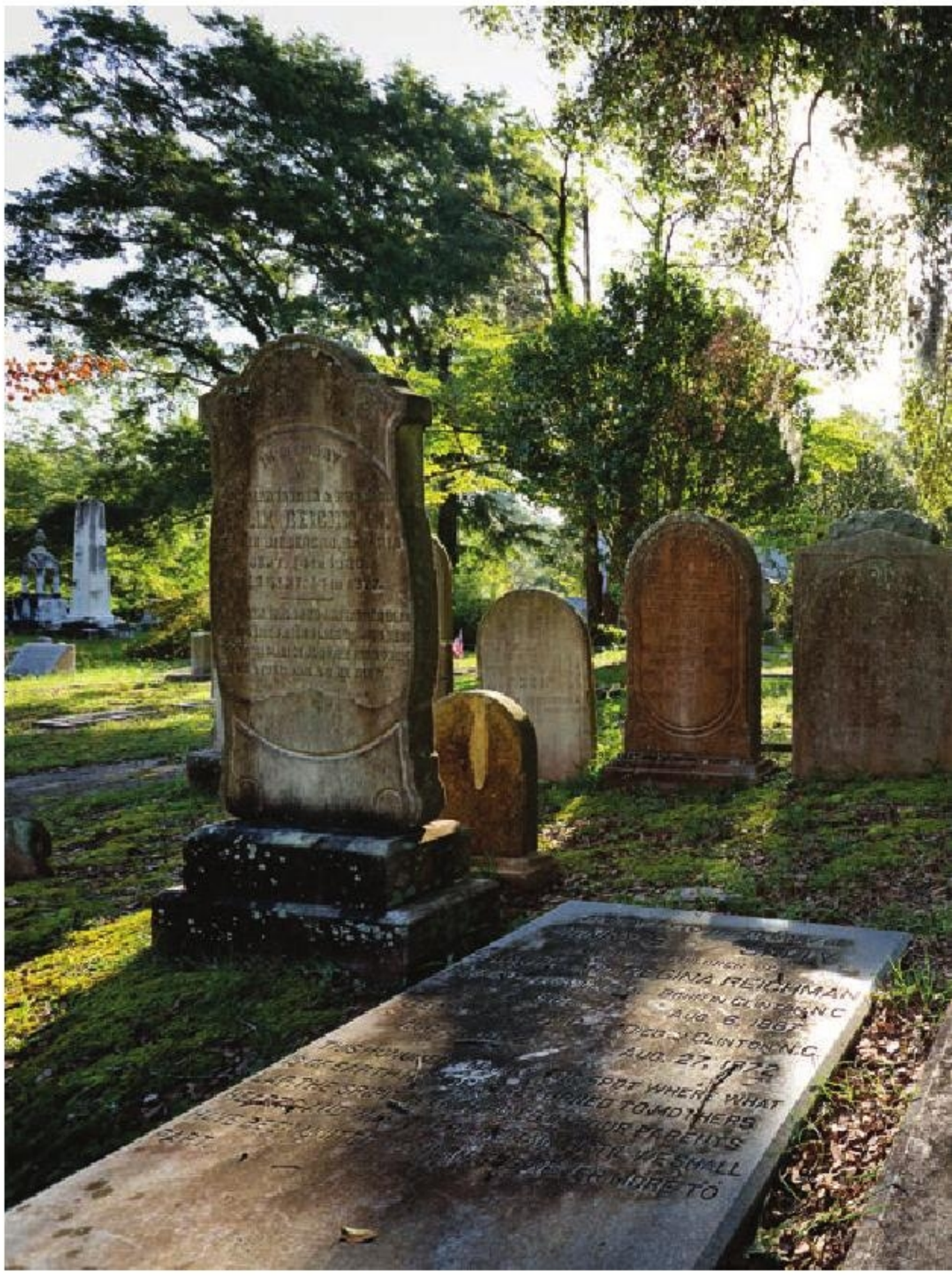
Epitaphs account for the years, months and days lived.

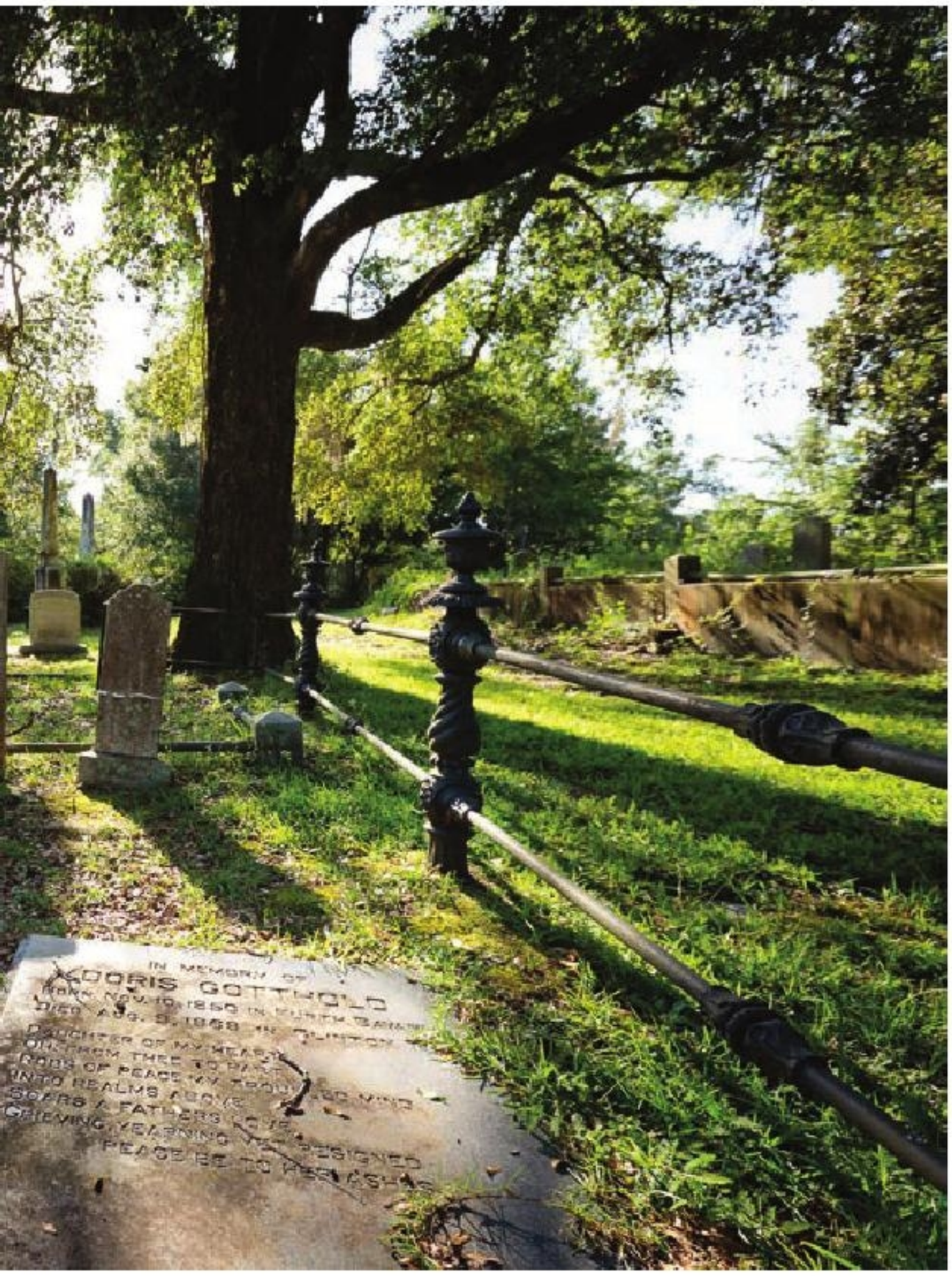
"Every day is important," says Kozen.

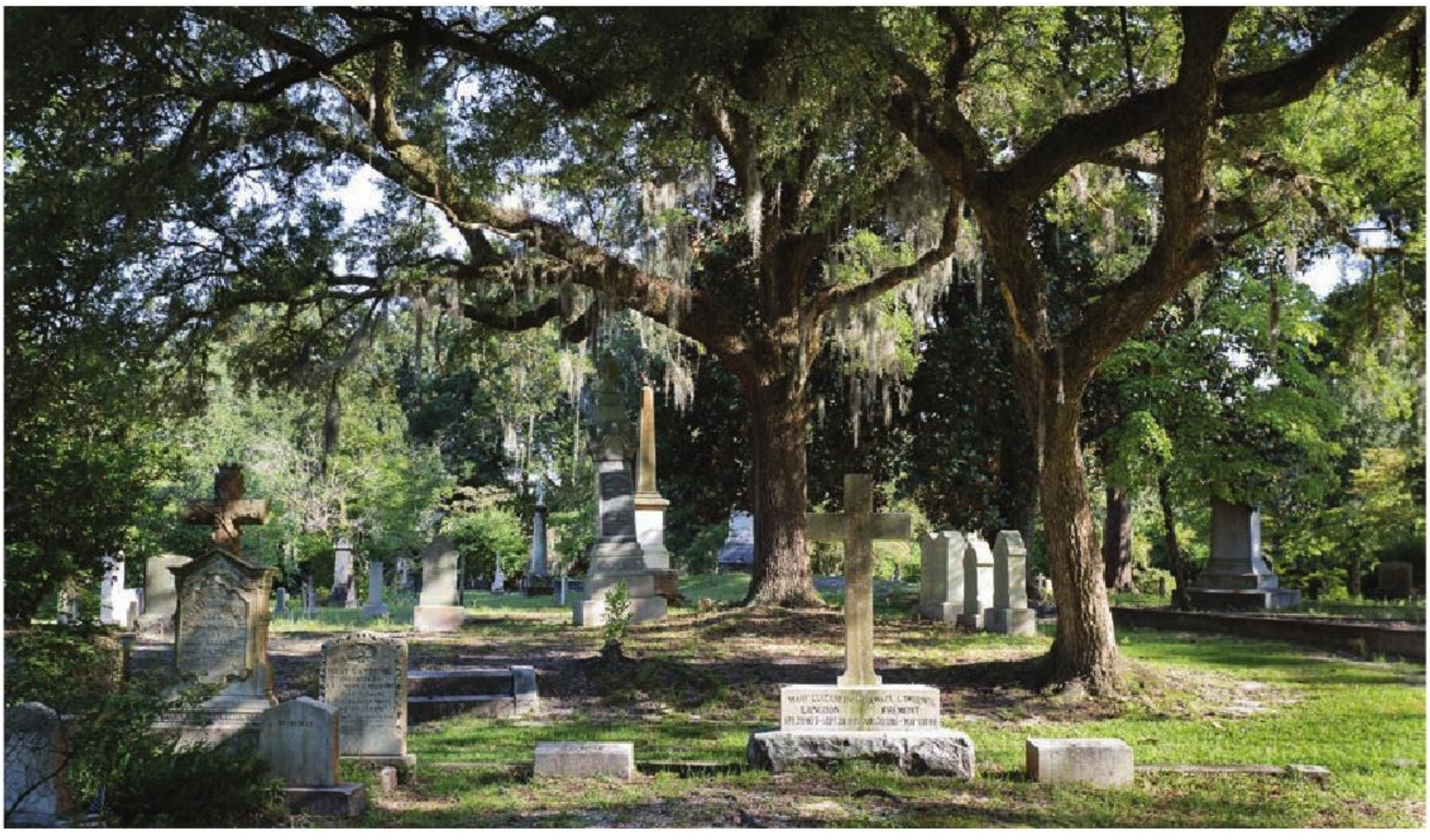
A dead dogwood, hauntingly beautiful, stands nearby.

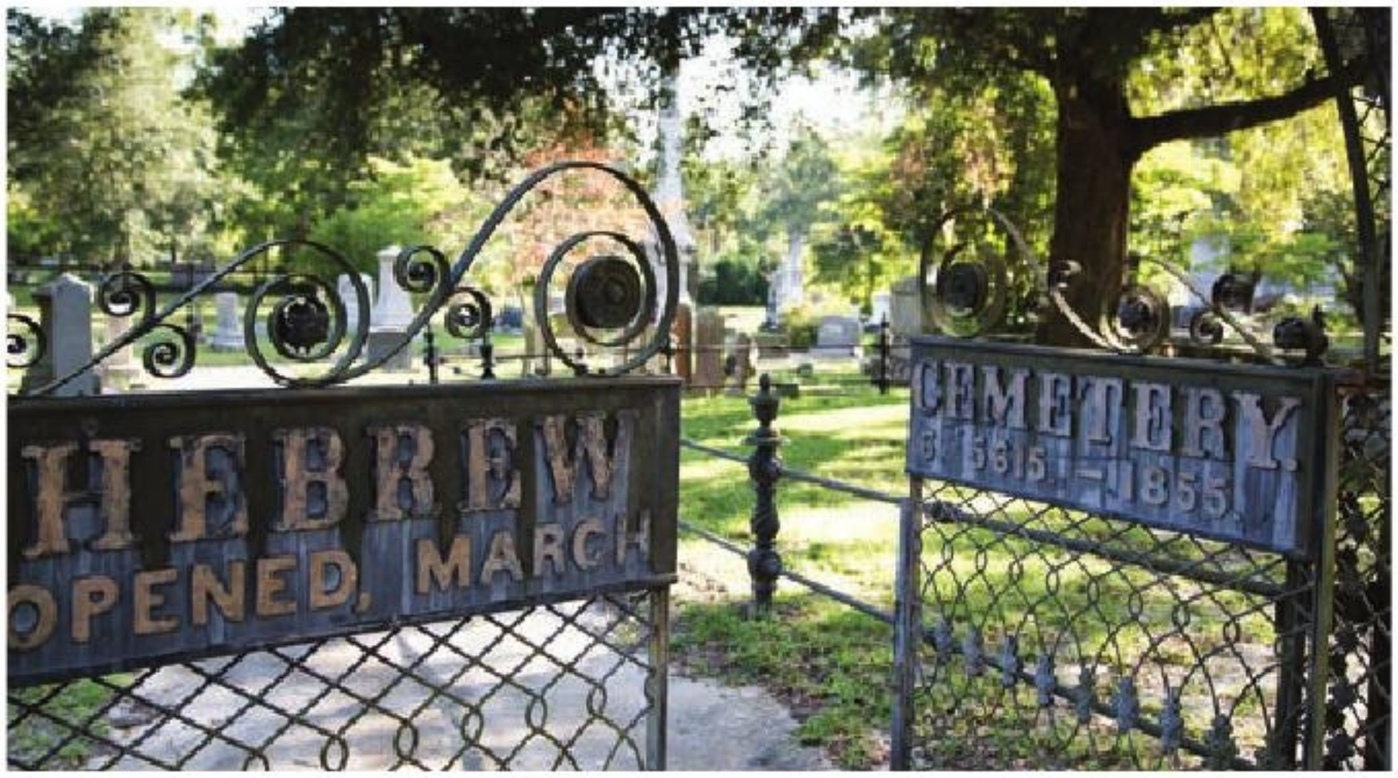
"This tree is just like you and me," he adds. We're all here for a period of time.

Bless these hallowed grounds.




IN MEMORY OF
DORIS GOTTWALD

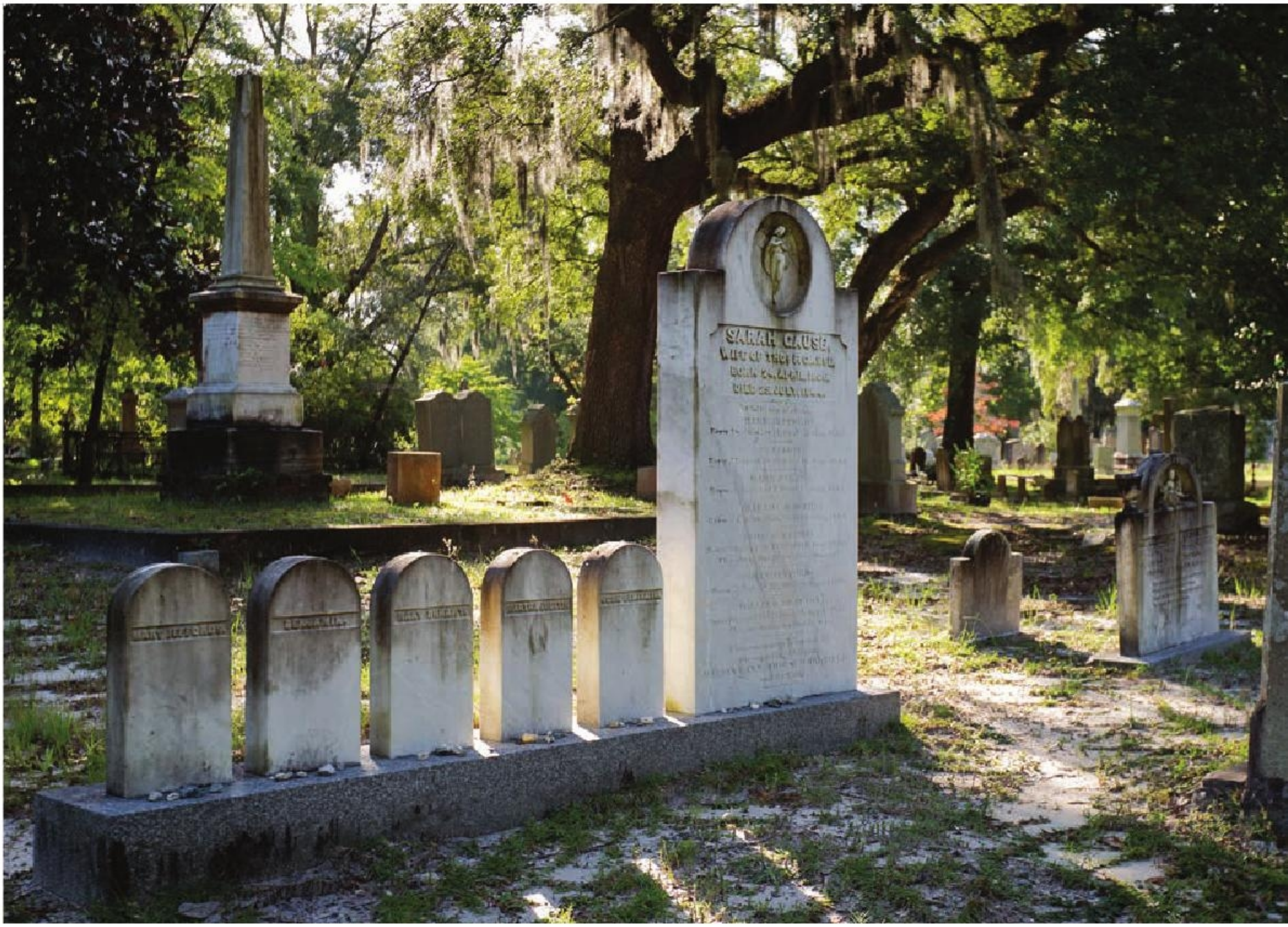



HEBREW
OPENED, MARCH
CEMETERY
5615 - 1855

OWEN,
SON OF
HARDY L.& MAMIE B.
FENNELL
BORN MAY 11 1892

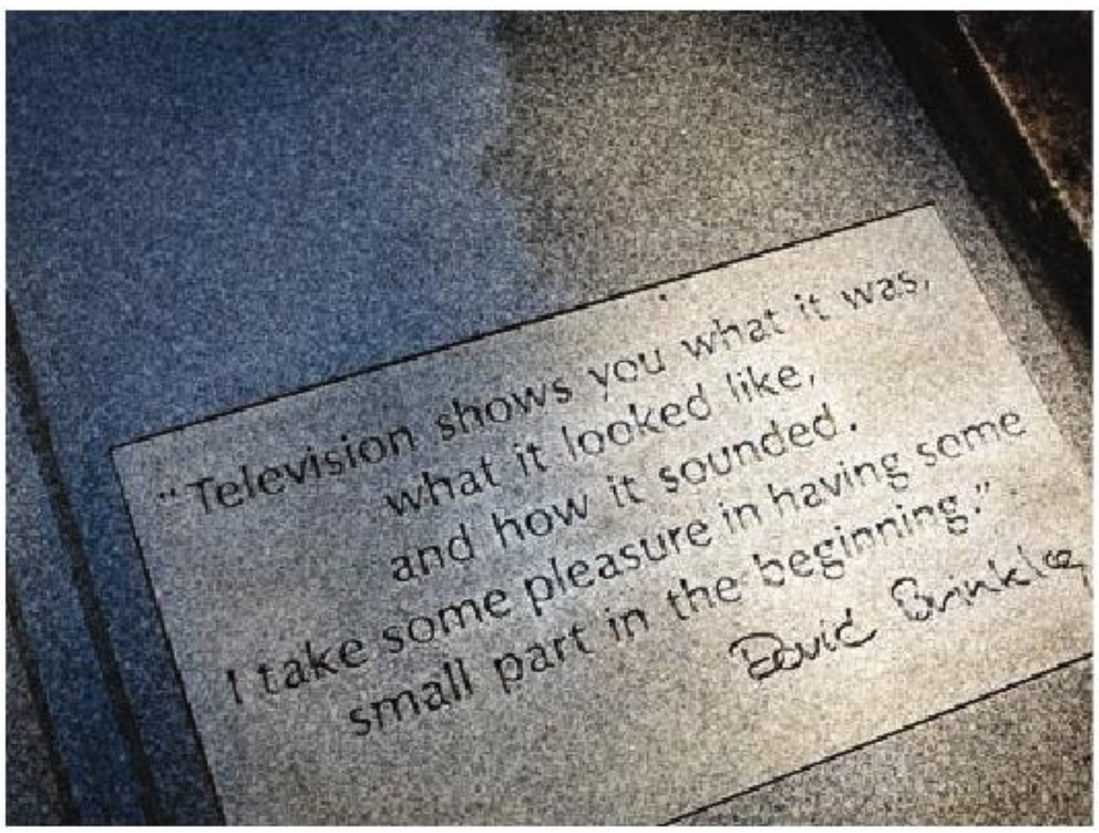
BORN
DIED

LOUIS
AUG. 4, 18
ELEAN
APR 2
MARGA
MAY 2
WILLIAM FITZHUGH
HALL
DEC. 2
1914 - SEPT. 25


SARAH CLUSE

1862 BURIAL SITE
OF YELLOW FEVER VICTIMS
Communal burial site of approximately 400 people who died of yellow fever during Wilmington's epidemic between September and the frosts of November 1862. Few yellow fever victims' burials are marked with headstones.
In 1862 Wilmington's population, black and white, was approximately 10,000. About half of the population fled the city to avoid the epidemic. Of the 1,505 reported cases, 654 (43%) died of yellow fever.

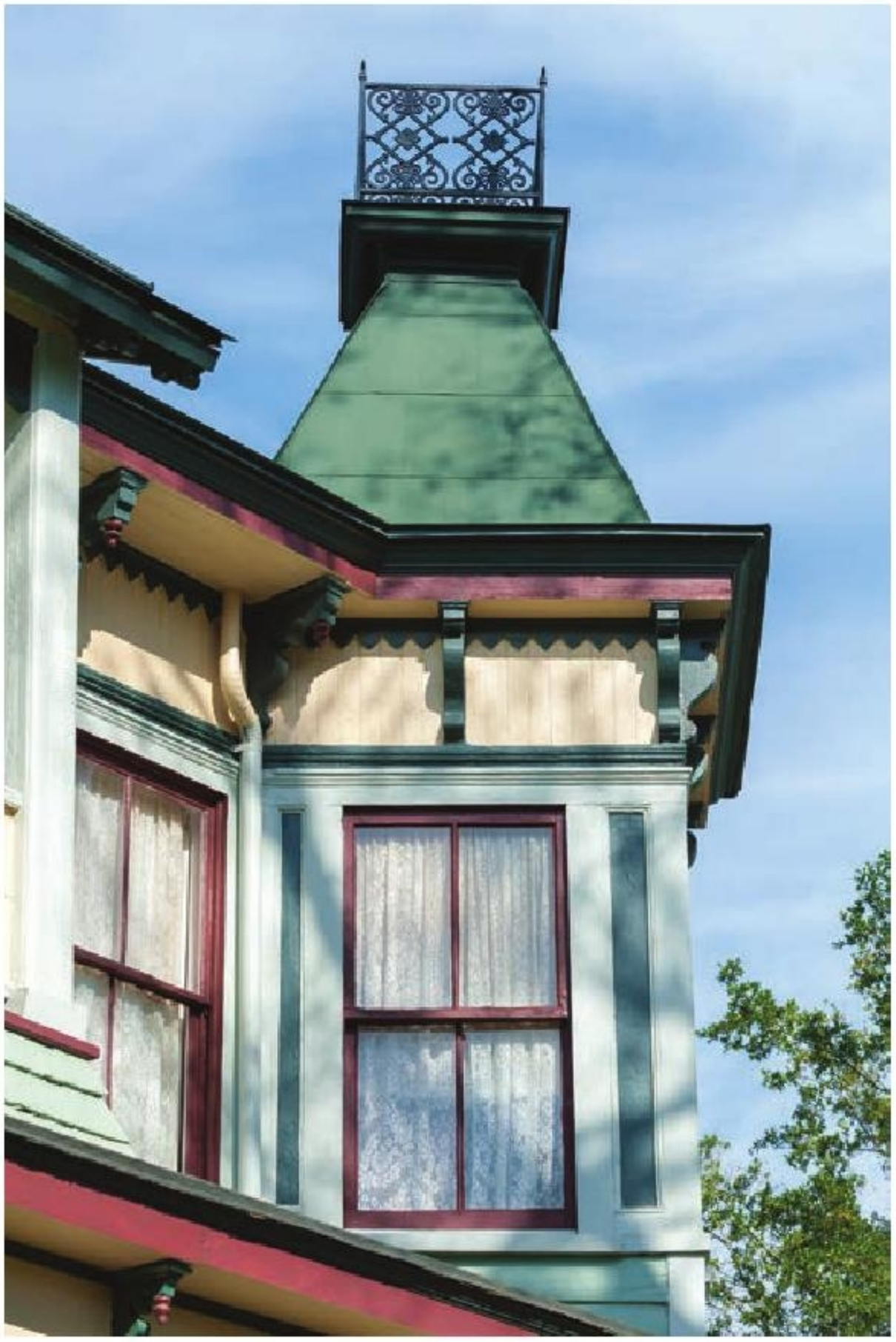
HEINSTEIN


"Television shows you what it was,
what it looked like,
and how it sounded.
I take some pleasure in having some
small part in the beginning."
David Brinkley

The Ghost and Mrs. Keiser

In the beautiful old house on historic Sixth Street, the spirit of love – and loss – abide

By Brooks Newton Preik · Photographs by Rick Ricozzi



On a quiet tree-shaded section of historic North Sixth Street, lined with lovingly restored homes, one house stands out above the rest. It is a gracious, two-story 1850s Italianate residence with picturesque Queen Anne embellishments in muted tones of sage, forest green and burgundy with pale cream trim. Although the architecture is significant, that is not what sets this home apart. Beyond the decorative moldings and the crested turret is something far more intriguing. The house at number 215 is haunted.

In 1993, the Yopp-Goodman house, located near the corner of North Fifth and Princess streets, was donated to the Historic Wilmington Foundation (HWF) with the stipulation that the structure had to be moved. David and Mary Ann Keiser, local historic preservationists, first heard about the house when it was advertised by the HWF.

"It was the Foundation's ad, offering to give the house to anyone willing to move it, that gave David the incentive to explore the possibilities," says Mary Ann Keiser. "For me, it was the lovely lace curtains at the turret windows that captured my attention." She and her husband had already restored five homes in the area. After investigating, they were eager to tackle this one.

When the difficult move to its present location was accomplished, the couple settled into the small apartment at the rear of the 4,300-square-foot home, ready to begin their restoration.

Layers and layers of paint, crumbling plaster, old knob and tube wiring, and an outdated heating system complete with radiators all had to be removed. One day in the midst of drop cloths, dust and paint cans, Mary Ann heard the phone ring. She almost didn't stop to answer it, but curiosity prevailed. She lifted the receiver.

"Do you know you have just bought a haunted house?"

Completely stunned, Mary Ann at once recognized the voice of an old friend, whom she hadn't talked with in ages. Her friend Becky, she learned, had actually owned the house for a time. She, too, had hopes of renovating it, and had rented rooms to get the extra money she needed for repairs. All went well until one of the tenants abruptly announced her departure. She had awakened during the night to see the figure of a woman standing at the foot of her bed. The woman was dressed in clothes from another era and her long hair was twisted into a bun on top of her head. As the frightened resident watched, the figure simply vanished. No amount of coaxing could persuade the renter to stay.

Shortly afterward another tenant gave her notice. Not only had she seen the woman described by the first tenant, she had heard her speak as well. In an eerie, far-off sounding voice the ghost said, "You'll be safe as long as you live here." The lodger explained that it was as if she were looking into a mirror and suddenly the apparition appeared there, in front of her. As she watched, terrified, the figure faded slowly from sight until she had completely disappeared.

Not daring to interrupt her caller, Mary Ann listened patiently to Becky's other accounts of spectral visits, but she was secretly skeptical. Nothing, she decided, was going to dampen her enthusiasm for her new home. She did, however, tell her husband about the strange phone call.

For a while, Mary Ann says, the restoration kept her too busy to even think about the ghost stories — until one night at about 10:30 p.m., as she drove down the darkened street toward the house. Feeling strangely uneasy, she reached for her cell phone on the seat beside

Upstairs, original heart pine flooring gleams in the living room, where Victorian furnishings reign

her. She dialed her home number and David answered, as she hoped he would. She told him she was approaching the driveway and asked him to turn on the outside light. As she drove in, she noticed with relief that the porch light was on.

Stepping from her car alongside the back of the house, which placed her directly beneath the window of the rear bedroom of the main structure, Mary Ann had just begun walking forward when she heard a soft, high-pitched voice call her name.

"Mary Ann."

An unexpected fear seized her. Then, thinking that her husband, who loved to play tricks on her, might have slipped into that part of the house and disguised his voice, she paused and listened more intently. The mysterious voice in the distance called her name a second time.

More perturbed now than frightened, she climbed the stairs to the back door. Instead of going into the apartment, she went into the darkened house, determined to catch her husband at his prank. She stood in the hallway and called loudly, "David." There was no answer. Suddenly she felt a cold shiver, and at that moment she knew for certain that her husband was not in the house. She rushed out the door and frantically let herself into their little apartment. There sat David, quietly reading, totally unaware of what had just happened.

The Keisers were both a bit shaken by the episode, especially when they learned a short time later that one of the former residents of the house — dead for many years — was also named Mary Ann.

Despite the experience, work on the house continued. The honey-hued patina of the original wide-planked, heart pine floors was restored, though vestiges of multiple coats of whitewash still remained imbedded in the

In the Music Room, the home's former drawing room, Victorian furniture and a Charles Stieff baby grand embody the spirit of the house.

Among the Keiser's various restoration projects: the beautiful heart pine balustrade.

Strange things happen in this house. Like the time Mary Ann found mysterious circles on the polished silver tray on her dining room table.

Says Mary Ann about her 1950s-era kitchen: "My husband was a collector."

cracks. Sometimes late at night the floors creaked with footsteps; upon investigation, no one was there.

"Our vacations were spent shopping for the house," Mary Ann says, "and it brought us such joy. We tried to be as period conscious as we could afford." They found an ancient copper bathtub with a wooden, dovetailed box surround for the downstairs bathroom that they couldn't resist, and combed through antique shops and flea markets searching for other unique furnishings.

For the Music Room they came upon an old Charles Stieff baby grand piano whose tones are still rich and pure. "The poor man's Steinway," Mary Ann quips. The room offers a visual feast of Victorian furniture and an eclectic array of vintage musical instruments and artwork. An authentic Edison home phonograph, circa 1898, fills one corner, and in front of a quaint fireplace, a graceful marble-top table is set for tea with a sheer linen, lace-trimmed cloth and pretty hand-painted porcelain. Four dainty side chairs with velvet cushions seem poised as if awaiting a visit from ladies of another century.

The Keisers were thrilled when the Goodman sisters, who had grown up here, contacted them and even arranged to join them to watch the house being moved. Kay Goodman Stern told them she was married in the house in the 1940s, and gave them a copy of her wedding photograph. Recalling that the house had originally been built for young John Yopp as a wedding gift from his mother, Mary Ann deemed the front guest bedroom downstairs — formerly the ladies' parlor — the Wedding Room. Myriad photographs and paintings apropos of that particular theme grace the walls, including the one of Kay Goodman Stern in her wedding ensemble coming down the long stairway with its beautiful heart

In the Wedding Room, formerly the ladies' parlor, a photograph of Kay Goodman Stern hangs on the red-violet walls. She was married in this house in the 1940s.

pine balustrade. Cherished antiques such as her grandmother's bed and treadle sewing machine are showcased in this room, and the windows are adorned with some of the lace curtains her mother made for each of the fifty-seven windows in the house. Mary Ann pulls an old-fashioned hoop skirt from behind the door that her mother—never one to waste a thing—made from the delicate lace curtains that first attracted her to the house. "I wore the skirt to a neighborhood costume ball," she says with a smile.

One day an unexpected invitation arrived for a party given by Kay Goodman Stern, who owned a vacation home near Figure Eight Island. There, Mary Ann and David were introduced to a friend of Mrs. Stern who was purported to have psychic powers. *Ghosthunters* was a popular TV show on the Discovery Channel at the time and since the lady professed to have some of the same expertise as the stars of the show, the Keisers decided to let her have a go at their resident ghost. "She walked slowly through the rooms downstairs with her hands raised above her head and bent at the elbows. In each room she said, 'I feel nothing,'" Mary Ann remembers. Then she came to the rear bedroom. As she approached the left rear window, she said excitedly, "Oh, this is the portal." The psychic seemed convinced that the presence, which haunted the house, entered here from another dimension. From that time on the Keisers jokingly referred to the portal location as "The Haunted Room."

With the downstairs almost completed, the Keisers began work on their second floor living quarters. "We decided to get away for a break after painting our bedroom. It looked gorgeous, and we were so proud, but exhausted, too," Mary Ann says. "When we returned and went upstairs, I looked with dismay at the wall beside my bed. I saw that something was splattered there as if someone had blown wax from a candle all over it. I had to scrape it off. No one had been in the house while we were gone and no one else had a key.

"Another time," adds Mary Ann, "I had polished a silver tray until it shone and left it on the dining room table. When we came home I found three circles on the tray like those left by wet glasses, and there were crumbs scattered about."

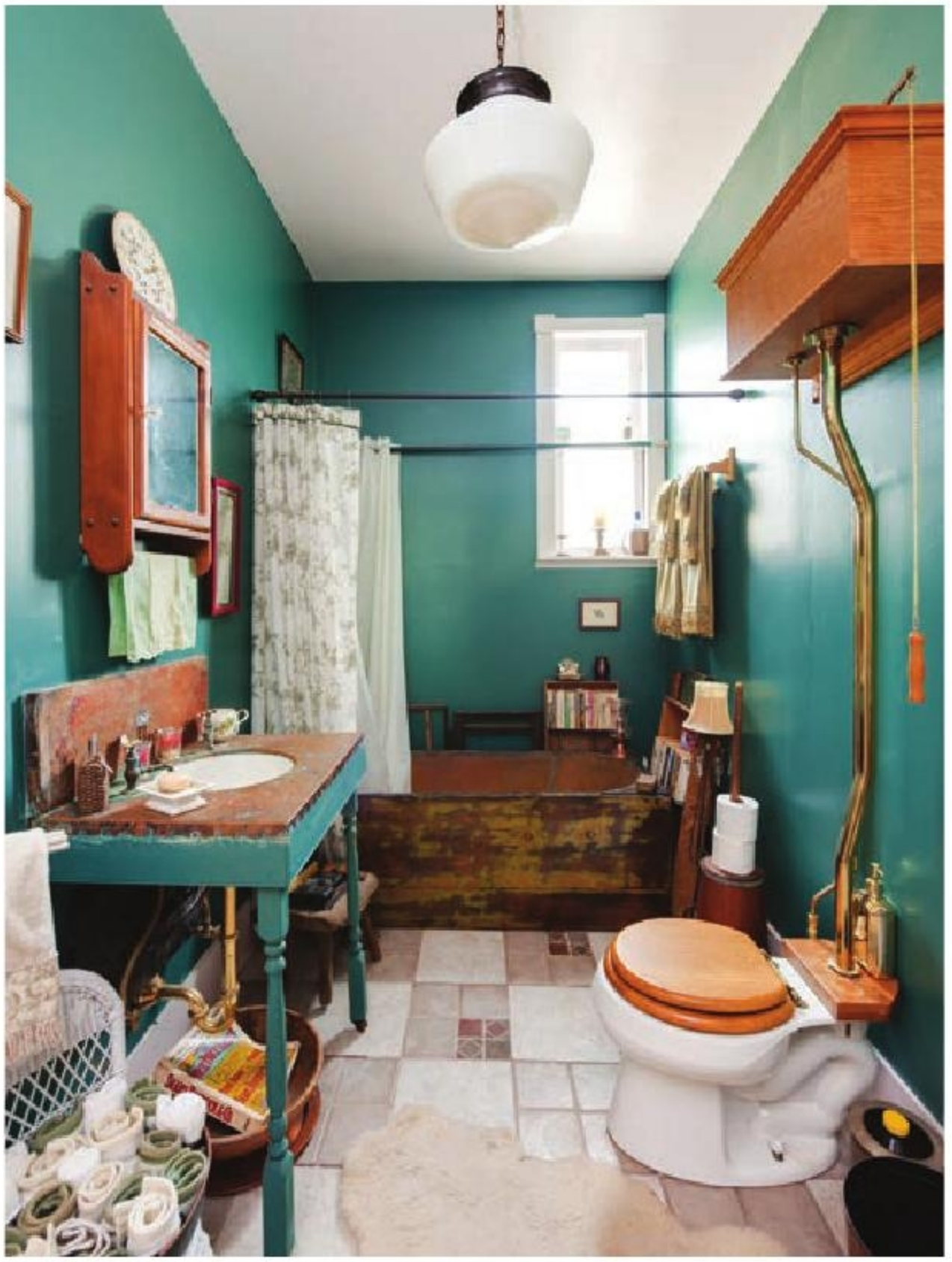
The Keisers were, nonetheless, blissfully happy in their home. They had finally grown used to the unexplainable footsteps, the cabinet doors opening and shutting at all hours of the night, and the eerie sounds and chilling feelings they sometimes experienced. On one of their shopping forays, they even bought a framed portrait of a lady dressed in period costume with her hair twisted into a bun on top of her head that looked to them exactly like the phantom lady Becky had described when she told them about the ghost. They decided to hang the portrait in the back of the hall.

Their happiness was shattered when, in the fall of 2010, David Keiser was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He died in December of that year, at the age of 61, in the home that was so dear to his heart. It is still difficult for Mary Ann to talk about her husband without her eyes filling with tears.

There was no question in Mary Ann Keiser's mind that she would continue to live in the old house after David's death. It was the place they both loved and worked on together, and it is the place where she still feels closest to the husband she adored. She has no fear of the ghost. In fact, she admits she is often comforted by the thought of its presence though occasionally they have a battle of wills—like the one she recently lost when a much-loved painting she tried to hang in the Haunted Room would not stay on the wall.

As to why the ghost chose to remain with the house when it was moved, she has this to say: "David and I assumed that she loved the house as much as we did and just couldn't bear to let it go."

Brooks Newton Preik is the author of Haunted Wilmington and the Cape Fear Coast, *a collection of legends and lore of the area.*



In the downstairs bathroom, accessible from the "haunted" guest room, ancient copper bathtub and pull-chain toilet create a rustic feel. On display: Veterinary equipment that belonged to Mary Ann's father.

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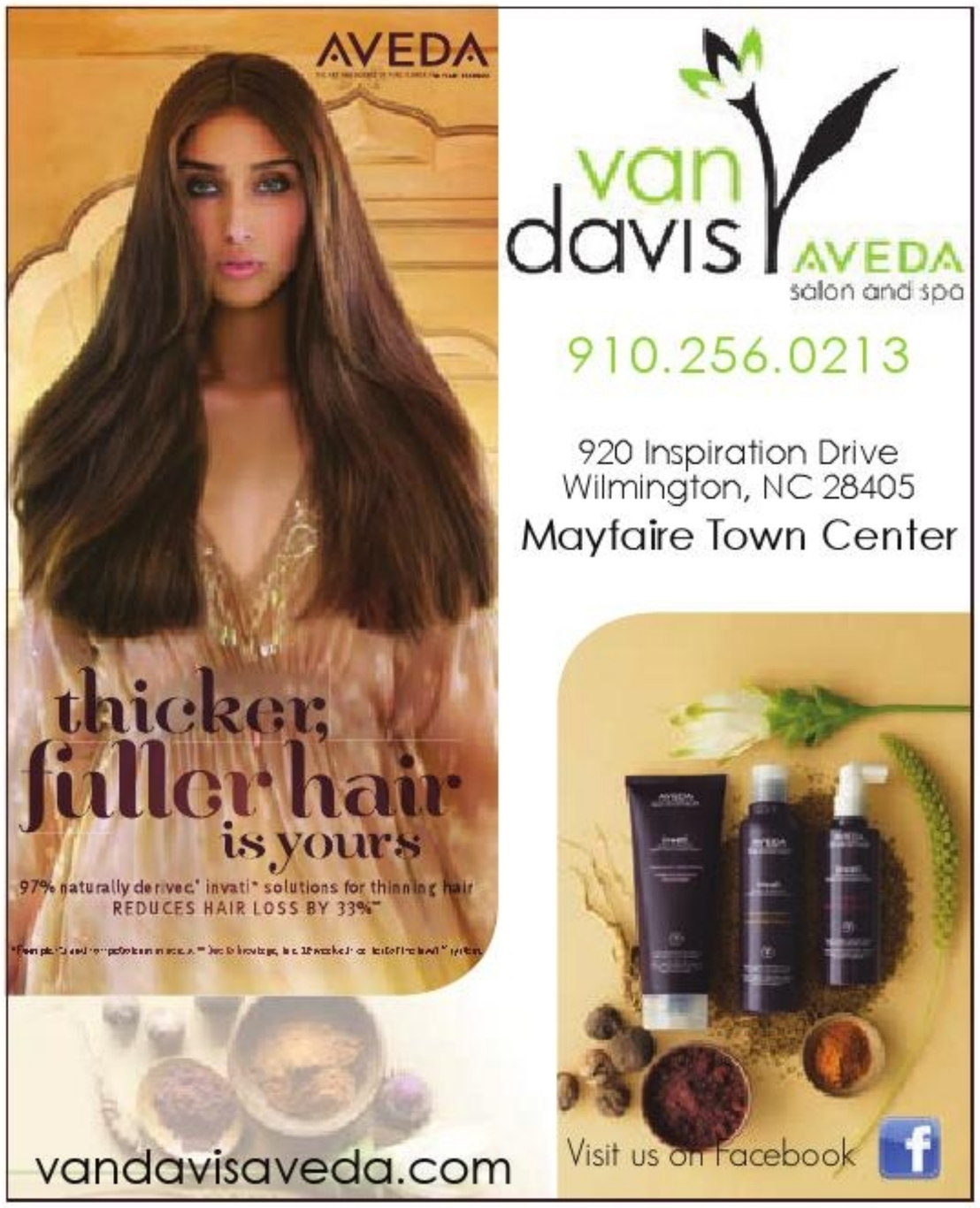
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ALMANAC

October

By Noah Salt

A Writer in the Garden

Sunday, October 27

The only thing I have learned in thirty-eight years is that the days grow shorter each year of your life, and if you live long enough it should be very easy to die, as there would be practically nothing left of them. I have been spending every day and all of it in the garden, dashing in to dress and go on to something else."

— From *Becoming Elizabeth Lawrence, Discovered Letters of a Southern Gardener*

Frightfully Bittersweet

We do love October, and just about everything this bittersweet month of change has to offer. As nature shows her true colors and beds down for the winter, we revel in the crisp clear days and star-spangled nights. The garden produces a few decent final tomatoes and the shrub roses provide a final burst of color before the show closes down for another year. Mums bloom, asters fade. The Saturday morning farmers market is finally winding down, though root vegetables and apples abound, and pumpkins and fresh-pressed cider make it still worth a visit.

According to a 2011 Harris Poll, Americans rank Halloween the third most popular holiday after Christmas and Thanksgiving, respectively — and a frightfully fun windfall for retailers, who will rake in an estimated $10 billion from costumes, sweets, home decorations and — a growing trend — special events (haunted hayrides, town celebrations, retail shops and even church-sponsored parties) deemed to make the popular holiday safer.

Not bad for a holiday that derives its spirit from the ancient Celtic celebration of "Samhain," an annual feast of the dead that observed the final harvest by the slaughtering of animals for winter food and the making of bone-fires after public feasting (the bones of animals were tossed into the fire as offerings for healthy stock in the New Year), the origin of the modern word "bonfire." Empty chairs were set by the hearth for unseen visitors and fresh apples were buried by the roadside for wandering or lost souls. Any crops left in the field were considered taboo and also left for hungry spirits. Candles were left in windows and in hollowed-out turnips to guide departed ancestors safely home, especially on the night of the 31st, when the veil between the worlds of the living and dead was believed to be its thinnest.

On Old Hallowmas, traveling after dark was not advised — which is why people dressed in white or donned costumes to hide their identity from revengeful or prankish spirits.

And here you thought it was all about the candy.

Weather to Buy or Not

A crusty old Englishman of our acquaintance once advised: "Never believe a bloody word of ancient weather lore — or else it will rain forty days and forty nights." Sound advice, we suppose, and yet few seasonal changes abound with traditional lore and old-wives wisdom than the month of October. From *The True Husbandry's Almanack of 1779*, portents seem everywhere:

Extra red haws and hips [berries] on trees and wooly worms crossing the High Street meaneth a hard winter to come.

Rain in October means sharpe wind in December.

When birds and badgers are swollen [fat], expect a colder than normal winter.

In October, dung your field, and your land shall wealth much yield.

If ducks do slide at Hallowtide, at Christmas they will swim.

Why the wooly worm feels compelled to cross the High Street is anyone's guess, one of those timeless philosophical questions best debated over a nice milk stout or homemade ginger beer by the fire. Still, this year's crop farmers almanacs do project a colder than normal winter on the doorstep, with greater than usual snow predicted for our corner of the lower forty-eight.

Don't forget to dung those fields.

Garden To-Do List

A garden made neat and tidy now, goes a famous ditty, will save spring tasks and how:

Bring geraniums and other vacationing houseplants indoors before first frost.

Harvest the last fruit from trees, plant winter veggie seeds — collards and ever-popular kale.

As the month proceeds, plant flowering bulbs — tulips, daffodils and alliums.

After killing frost, judiciously prune shrubs of dead wood.

Mow lawn a final time, apply an organic winter fertilizer, and rake up all remaining dead leaves.

Clean and oil garden tools. Drain and store lawn mower and other garden machinery.

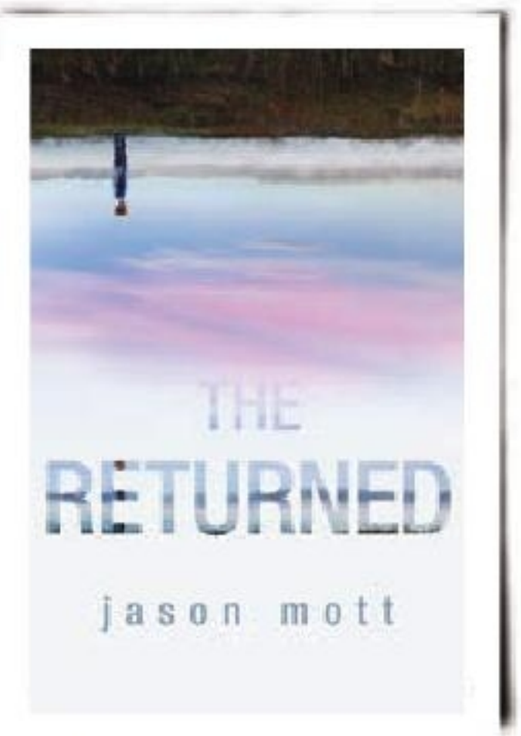
Take a long walk through the neighborhood and enjoy the summer's last show of color.

October 2013

Arts Calendar

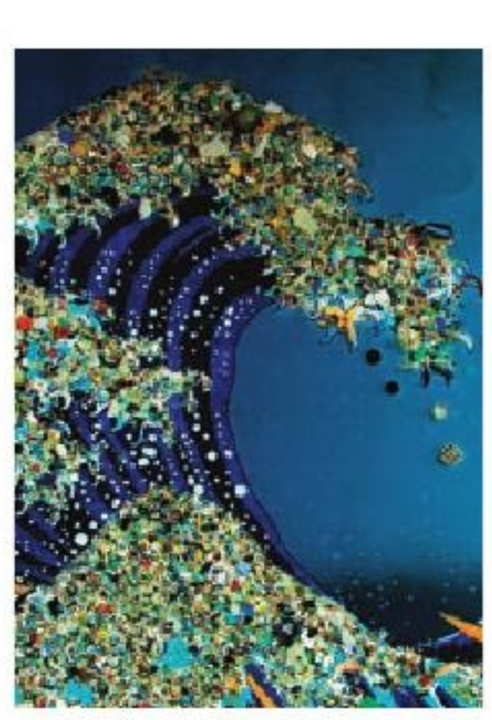
Cinematique Film

10/1–2



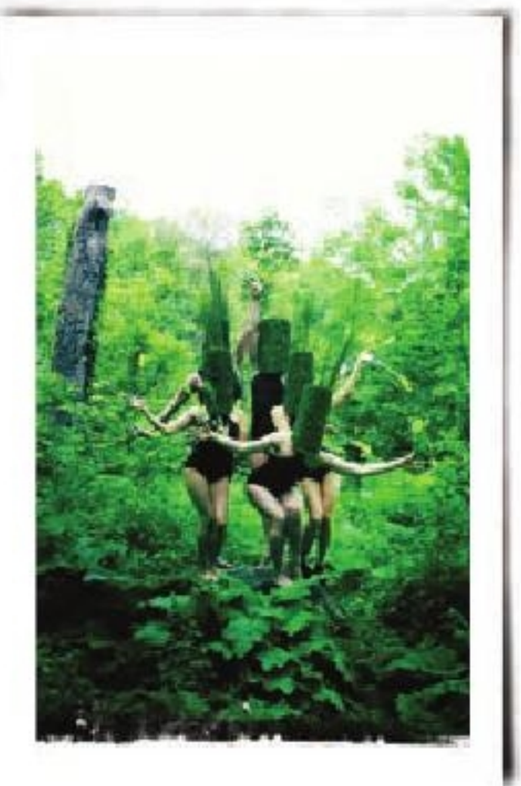
Book Reading

10/3



Piano Concert

10/24



Fables on Global Warming

10/26

10/1 Meet the Author

6:30 p.m. Dana Sachs will read from and sign copies of her latest novel, *The Secret of the Nightingale Palace*. Book available for purchase. Northeast Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6323.

10/1–2 Fall Book Sale

9 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Tuesday); 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Wednesday) Friends of the New Hanover Public Library presents its semi-annual Book Sale. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6319 or www.nhclibrary.org.

10/1–2 Cinematique Film

7:30 p.m. *In A World*. Admission: $8. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.whqr.org; www.thalianhall.org.

10/1–3 Woody Guthrie Tribute

7–9 p.m. Stone Soup Concerts presents three nights of music; each evening, seven musicians perform the songs of legendary folk musician and songwriter Woody Guthrie. Admission: $2. Limited seating. Ted's Fun on the River, 2 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 777-8889 or www.tedsfun.com.

10/1–31 Quilting Exhibit

10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Tuesday–Saturday); 1–5 p.m. (Sunday). Celebrate traditional quilting arts, steeped in African-American heritage. Exhibit held on the second floor of the mansion. Quilting by St. Mark's Episcopal Church African-American Quilting Circle. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-8700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/3 Pink Ribbon Luncheon

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. New Hanover Regional Medical Center Foundation presents a fundraising luncheon featuring New York Times best-selling author Emily Griffin. Proceeds help provide mammography screenings, diagnostics, comfort items and spiritual support to local women without insurance or other financial resources. Admission: $75. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 815-5002 or www.business-madecasual.com.

10/3 Jazz @ the CAM

6:30–8 p.m. Benny Hill Quartet. Tickets: $12/non-members; $8/members; $5/students. Weyerhaeuser Reception Hall, Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

10/3 Book Reading

7 p.m. Jason Mott reads from his debut novel, *The Returned*. McNeil Hall, Room 1005, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-7063.

10/3 Shakespeare Club Film

7:30 p.m. *Richard III* (1995). Tickets: $7. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/3 Winds Ensemble

7:30 p.m. UNCW Wind Symphony and Chamber Winds joined by the Army Ground Forces Band. Admission: $5. Kenan Auditorium, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3415 or www.uncw.edu/arts/kenan-calendar.html

10/3 Live Jazz Music

8 p.m. Cacaw, a futuristic jazz trio from New York City. Admission: $10. Squidco, 928 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4847 or www.squidco.com.

10/4 Quilting Exhibit Opening

6:30–8:30 p.m. Celebrate traditional quilting arts, steeped in African-American heritage. Wine and refreshments available. Exhibit held on the second floor of the mansion. Quilting by St. Mark's Episcopal Church African-American Quilting Circle. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-8700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/3–6 Live Theater

8 p.m.; 3 p.m. (Sunday) *How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying*, a Tony Award-winning American classic. Admission: $30; $15 (Thrifty Thursday). Thalian Hall Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

PAINTING BY JOANNE GEISEL; "PLASTIC OCEAN" BY BONNIE COSTUMES BY DOUG FITCH & PHOTO BY EDOUARD GETAZ MONTELEONE

Yoga at CAM

10/4

Cinematique Film

10/7

Lighthouse Beer Festival

10/19

Art Exhibit & Opening

10/25

10/3–6 Live Theater

8 p.m.; 3 p.m. (Sunday) Big Dawg Productions presents Moliere's classic comedic farce, *Tartuffe*. Admission: $15–20. Cape Fear Playhouse, 613 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 367-5237 or www.bigdawgproductions.org.

10/3–6 Live Theater

8 p.m.; 2 p.m. (Sunday) The Department of Theatre at UNCW presents *Sordid Lives*, a dark comedy about a colorful Texas family dealing with the accidental death of the family matriarch during a covert meeting in a motel with a younger, married neighbor. Admission: $5–12. UNCW Cultural Arts Building, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.uncw.edu/theatre.

10/4–6 Riverfest Celebration

Annual street fair featuring food, arts and crafts, dance performances, fireworks, children's activities, car show, live music and more. Downtown Wilmington, Riverfront Park, Water Street. Info: (910) 452-6862 or www.wilmingtonriverfest.com.

10/4–6 Home Show

11 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Saturday); 10 a.m. – 6 p.m (Sunday) American Consumer Shows presents hundreds of exhibits designed for homeowners in all stages of remodeling, landscaping and decorating. Concessions available. Free admission. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (888) 433-3976 or www.businessmadecasual.com.

10/5 First Saturday Seminar

8 a.m. Pancake breakfast followed by a lecture with author Philip Gerard, "One River, Many Lives." Cape Fear River Watch, 617 Surry Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-5606 or www.cfrw.us.

10/5 Metropolitan Opera

12:55 p.m. Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, live in HD. Lumina Theater, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3195 or www.uncw.edu/lumina.

10/5 Rendezvous on the River

6–10 p.m. Heavy hor d'oeuvres, beer and wine, silent auction, live music with Carl Newton and the 5th Avenue Band, plus a view of the Riverfest fireworks. Proceeds benefit scholarships for UNCW's student-athletes. Admission: $40–60. Cameron-Holloman-McCarley House, 510 Surry Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-7737.

10/5 Piano & Oboe Recital

7:30 p.m. Featuring Bettsy Curtis (piano) and Jennifer Muehrcke (oboe). Admission: $5. Beckwith Recital Hall, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3415.

10/5 Cape Fear Blues Jam

8 p.m. A unique gathering of the area's finest blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

10/5–6 Art in the Arboretum

10–4 p.m. (Saturday); 12–4 p.m. (Sunday) An outdoor showcase of handcrafted jewelry, glass, textiles, metal work, stepping stones, wood, painting and photography among the coastal gardens. Event also includes plein air demonstrations, live performances by local musicians, and children's activities. Admission: $5; free for children under 12. Proceeds benefit the Arboretum's educational and public service programs. New Hanover County Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7660 or www.gardeningnhc.org.

10/6 Free Day at Airlie

9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Free admission on the first Sunday of each month. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

10/6 Free Day at CFM

1–5 p.m. Free admission on the first Sunday of each month. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4362 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

10/7 Concert at Greenfield Lake

6:30 p.m. Passion Pit with The Joy Formidable. Admission: $30–35. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-7855 or www.greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

10/7 Meet the Author

7 p.m. Stanley Riggs, coastal geographer on faculty at ECU and the author of *The Fight For North Carolina's Coast*. Program co-sponsored by the NC Coastal Federation, Cape Fear Audubon, and the Friends of NHC Library. Northeast Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 409-5160.

10/7–9 Cinematique Film

7:30 p.m. *Blue Jasmine*. Admission: $8. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.whqr.org; www.thalianhall.org.

10/9 Canadian Brass

8 p.m. Wilmington Concert Association presents a storied musical ensemble. Kenan Auditorium, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.uncw.edu/arts/kenan-calendar.html.

10/9–15 WHQR Pledge Drive

WHQR's Fall Partnership Challenge Pledge Drive. Tune in this week to 91.3 FM and help raise funds for quality community-supported radio. Pledge online: www.whqr.org; or by phone: (910) 343-1640.

10/10 Lecture Night

6:30–8:30 p.m. Mary Wayne Watson presents "Women's Attitudes Toward Secession and the Civil War." Original, unpublished documents and correspondence from gifted Sandhills women provide unique and fascinating perspectives of the beginning, middle and end of the Civil War period in North Carolina. Seating limited. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Reservations: infor@bellamymansion.org. Info: (910) 251-8700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/12 Back Door Kitchen Tour

10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Self-guided walking tour featuring nine kitchens in Wilmington's Historic District. Rain or shine. Tickets: $25/adults; $15/children 12 and under. Group discounts available. Two com-

plimentary trolleys will provide transportation between the homes. Proceeds benefit Residents of Old Wilmington, a not-for-profit downtown neighborhood association involved in various downtown projects. Tickets available at area Harris Teeters, Finkelstein Music, Wilmington Water Tours, Great Harvest Bread Company, Taste the Olive, Cat on a Whisk, and House of Wine & Cheese. Info: www.rowilmington.org/tour.

10/12 Port City Rumble

11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Modified cars, motorcycles, hot rods, creeper races, and an awards ceremony, plus an after party at Orton's (6 p.m.) with live music by The Tremors, Motor Billy, and The Cheats. Princess and Second streets, Wilmington. Info: (216) 374-8884.

10/12 Mother Earth Brewing

6 p.m. Tastings, giveaways, live music, food truck and more. Fermental, 7250-B Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 821-0362 or www.fermental.net.

10/12 North Carolina Symphony

7:30 p.m. "The Music of John Williams," featuring William Henry Curry, resident conductor; and Brian Reagin, violin. Kenan Auditorium, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.uncw.edu/arts/kenan-calendar.html.

10/12 Mark Twain Tonight!

8 p.m. Academy Award-nominated, Emmy and Tony Award-winning actor Hal Holbrook performs his signature role. Tickets: $70; $55; $25. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/13 Sunday Jazz Brunch

12–2 p.m. Featuring the Nina Repeta Jazz Trio. Admission: $15–20. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: www.theatrewilmington.com/home.html.

10/13 Preservation Celebration

1–5 p.m. The Gathering, a community event that celebrates the preservation of a rare, urban slave building on the site of the Bellamy Mansion Museum of History and Design Arts. Learn about the lives of those who lived and worked here. Refreshments available; guest speakers, community leaders and local and regional choirs will entertain. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-8700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/13 Documentary Film

3 p.m. *Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy.* An engaging, humorous, and provocative look at the role of Jewish composers and lyricists in the creation of the modern American musical. Tickets: $10; $8/student. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/13 Wilmington Zombie Run

4 p.m. Zombie-infested 1.5-mile fun run around the campus of UNCW. Proceeds benefit paws4people foundation, a Wilmington based nonprofit organization that provides service dogs to veterans and children. Tickets: $15–20/advance; $20–$25/race day. Info: www.paws4people.org. Register: www.wilmingtonzombierun.com.

10/14 Prologue

7–8 p.m. Join Ben Steelman of *StarNews* and North Carolina writer Jason Mott for light refreshments and discussion of the author's new book, *The Returned*. The MC Erny Gallery at WHQR, 254 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1640 or www.whqr.org.

10/15 Young Life Banquet

6:30–8:30 p.m. Going the Distance with Kids. UNCW's Burney Center, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: www.younglifewilmington.younglife.org. Register: (910) 392-5551 or wilmington.younglife@gmail.com.

10/16 Rhythm & Blues Concert

8 p.m. The James Hunter Six. Tickets: $20–25/advance; $25–30/day of show. Doors open at 7 p.m. Brooklyn Arts Center at St. Andrews, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

10/17 Live Reggae Music

8 p.m. Ras-tober Festival features music from D.H.I.M., Signal Fire, and Guests. Doors open at 7 p.m.; vendor food available. Admission: $7. Brooklyn Arts Center at St. Andrews, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

10/18 Airlie Oyster Roast

6–11 p.m. Seasonal oysters, Carolina BBQ, fish fry, cash bar, plus live music with Heartbeat of Soul, and Sea Pans. Admission: $75. Proceeds benefit environmental education. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

10/18 Wilmington's Got Talent

7 p.m. A Port City talent show. Tickets: $20; $15/student. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/18–19 Fall Plant Sale

9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Saturday); 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Sunday) Discover a wide range of new and unusual plants, regional favorites, and bedding varieties. Proceeds benefit the Arboretum's educational and public service programs. New Hanover County Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7670 or www.gardeningnhc.org.

10/18–20 Live Musical Theater

8 p.m.; 3 p.m. (Sunday). *Ain't Misbehavin',* the classic musical about Thomas "Fats" Waller and the Golden Age of the Cotton Club in 1930s Harlem. Admission: $20–25. Scottish Rite Theater & Banquet Hall, 1415 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 515-3327.

10/18–20 Oktoberfest

5:30–11 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 11 p.m. (Saturday); 11 a.m. – 11 p.m (Sunday) Brats, beer and bands, plus wiener dog races and inflatable fun for kids. Proceeds benefit Pretty in Pink Foundation. Admission: $5. New Hanover County Government Center, 230 Government Center Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-6658 or www.oktoberfestwilmington.com.

10/19 Masterworks Concert

8 p.m. Wilmington Symphony Orchestra presents *Adagio for Strings*; Danijela Zezelj-Gualdi, violin. Concert includes area premiere of the Latvian composer Peteris Vasks' haunting violin concerto Toward a Distant Light. Tickets: $25–27; $6/youth. Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.wilmington-symphony.org.

10/19 Lighthouse Beer Festival

1–5 p.m. More than 100 craft breweries and wineries; food vendors on-site; live music featuring The Black Lillies. Admission: $13–45. Proceeds benefit The Carosel Center for Abused Children. Lighthouse Beer Festival Grounds, 3400 Randall Parkway, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-8622 or www.lighthousebeerfestival.com.

10/19 Country Music Concert

8 p.m. The Malpass Brothers. Tickets: $28; $22; $14. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org; malpassbrothers.com.

10/19–20 Model Railroad Fun

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. A weekend of railroad fun for the entire family. Free whistles for the kids. Admission: $5; free for ages 5 and under. Wilmington Railroad Museum, 505 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-2634 or www.wrrm.org.

10/20 Dance Showcase

2–4 p.m. The Dance Cooperative provides monthly informal showings to afford working artists a place to present works in progress to be reviewed and critiqued in a nurturing environment. Open to working choreographers, dancers and the general public. Donations appreciated. Weyerhaeuser Reception Hall, Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

10/20 Youth Orchestra

4 p.m. Wilmington Symphony Youth Orchestra Halloween Matinee. Tickets: $5; free for youth. Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: 962-3500 or www.wilmington-symphony.org.

10/20 Meet Jeffery Deaver

6 p.m. World-renowned author Jeffery Deaver shares secrets of his research and writing processes. Tickets: $30; $75/VIP cocktail reception. Proceeds benefit Cape Fear Literacy Council. UNCW's Burney Center Ballroom, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-0911 or www.cfliteracy.org/category/events.

10/20 Concert at Greenfield Lake

6 p.m. An Evening with Stephen "Ragga" Marley with special guests Wayne Marshall and Joe Mersa. Admission: $25. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (888) 512-7469 or www.greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

10/20 UNCW Chamber Choir

7:30 p.m. Directed by Joe Hickman. Admission: $5. Beckwith Recital Hall, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3415.

10/22 New Muse Piano Duo

7:30 p.m. Featuring Paola Savvidou and Jonathan Kuuskoski from the University of Missouri. Admission: $5. Beckwith Recital Hall, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3415.

10/23 Book Launch and Signing

7 p.m. Celia Rivenbark, *Rude Bitches Make Me Tired.* Barnes & Noble, Mayfaire Town Center, 850 Inspiration Drive, Wilmington. Info: (919) 509-1880 or www.celiarivenbark.com.

10/23 Film & Dance Films

7:30 p.m. Two film and dance documentaries, one hour each, shown back to back. *To Dance Like A Man* and *Chasing Dance.* Tickets: $7. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/24 Lecture Night

6:30–8:30 p.m. Harry Warren of the North Carolina Museum of Forestry presents "A Touch of Cape Fear History." Seating limited. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Reservations: infor@bellamymansion.org. Info: (910) 251-8700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

10/24 Piano Concert

7:30 p.m. Acclaimed composer and Wilmington native Meira Warshauer premieres her recently completed composition, *Ocean Calling*. Performed by resident pianist Norman Bemelmans and Elizabeth Loparits. Proceeds from performance will support a new piano scholarship in the memory of Mary Eunice Troy. Tickets: $20–25. Beckwith Recital Hall, Cultural Arts Building, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.uncw.edu/arts.

10/24–27 Landfall Tradition

Annual college/amateur golf tournament to benefit the UNCW golf scholarship fund. Country Club of Landfall Dye Course, Wilmington. Sponsorship opportunities: Pete at (910) 509-9292; Tournament registration: Fran at (910) 256-2348; Info: www.landfalltradition.com.

10/25 Concert at Legion Stadium

5 p.m. Cage the Elephant with New Politics, and The Features. Admission: $25. Legion Stadium, 2221 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-3088.

10/25 Art Exhibit Opening

6–9 p.m. "Painting Coastal North Carolina" features the works of twelve North Carolina artists. The MC Erny Gallery at WHQR, 254 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1640 or www.whqr.org.

10/25 The Vintage Event

6:30 p.m. Historic Wilmington Foundation's annual fall fundraiser. Evening includes heavy hors d'oeuvres provided by the area's best restaurants, an open bar, live music, and a silent auction featuring unique experiences, antiques, and wine. Tickets: $175/couple; $100/individual; $50/persons under age 30. Brooklyn Arts Center at St. Andrews, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

10/25 Modern Dance Production

8 p.m. The Chase Brock Experience. Tickets: $35; $28; $18. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/26 Ministering Circle Fall Sale

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Gourmet baked and frozen goods, homemade pickles, jellies, jams, and more. The Elks Club, 5102 Oleander Drive, Wilmington.

10/26 Metropolitan Opera

12:55 p.m. Shostakovich's *The Nose*, live in HD. Lumina Theater, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3195 or www.uncw.edu/lumina.

10/26 Masquerade Ball

6 p.m. A grand celebration of Good Shepherd Center's 30th anniversary. Includes dinner, drinks, live music and silent auction. Attire: black tie. Tickets: $100; $600/table. Hilton Wilmington Riverside, 301 North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-4424 or www.goodshepherdwilmington.org.

10/26 Fables on Global Warming

8 p.m. Using the familiar animal fables of Aesop, La Fontaine, traditional American Indians and Chuang Tzu, this hour-long performance blends classical ballet and contemporary dance with the witty words and music of singer/songwriter Corey Dargel, and the imaginative costumes and puppetry of visual artist Doug Fitch. Woven into the fabric of this intelligent and enchanting performance are ideas about climate change, preservation and responsibility. Choreographed by Karole Armitage. Tickets: $8–20. Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.uncw.edu/arts.

10/26 Variety Show

8 p.m. Willis Richardson Players present a fantastic fall showcase. Tickets: $12. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/27 Sacred Harp Singers

2–4 p.m. Using a modern reprint of an 1844 songbook, Wilmington Sacred Harp Singers present a dynamic form of a cappella social singing that dates back to Colonial America. Beginners welcome. Donations appreciated. Weyerhaeuser Reception Hall, Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: fasola.org; www.cameronartmuseum.com.

10/29 Halloween Bash

5:30–8 p.m. Bring your wee ghosts and goblins trick-or-treating on the mighty Battleship North Carolina. Admission: $5. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

10/29 Digital Bookmobile

This 74-foot, 18-wheel tractor-trailer is a high-tech update of the traditional bookmobile and engages visitors with the library's "virtual branch" website and collection of eBooks, audiobooks and more. The Digital Bookmobile is powered by OverDrive, which provides eBook-lending platforms for thousands of schools and libraries worldwide.Northeast Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6327.

10/30–31 The Rocky Horror Show

8 p.m. A humorous, musical tribute to the science fiction and horror B movies of the late 1940s through early 1970s. Tickets: $18 (Wednesday); $23; $25. Thalian Hall, Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Box Office: (910) 632-2285. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

10/31 Live Theater

8 p.m. *In The Next Room*, a comedy set in the dawn of the age of electricity. For opening night, patrons can choose their own ticket price ($5/minimum). Cape Fear Playhouse, 613 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 367-5237 or www.bigdawgproductions.org.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Tuesday Cape Fear Blues Jam

8 p.m. A unique gathering of the area's finest blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Tuesday Improv Comedy

8 p.m. LitProv: Long Form Improv at Old Books on Front Street, 249 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-6657 or oldbooksonfrontst.com.

Wednesday T'ai Chi at CAM

12–1 p.m. Qigong (Practicing the Breath of Life) with Martha Gregory. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

Thursday Yoga at CAM

12–1 p.m. Join in a soothing retreat sure to charge you up while you relax in a beautiful, comfortable setting. These sessions are ongoing and are open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

Thursday CAM Public Tours

7:30 p.m. Explore the newest exhibits at Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

Friday Yoga at CAM

5:30–6:30 p.m. Join in a soothing retreat sure to charge you up while you relax in a beautiful, comfortable setting. These sessions are ongoing and are open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

Friday Murder on the Set

6:30 p.m. An interactive murder mystery dinner show written by Hank Toler. Tickets: $42; $30/children under age 12. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

Saturday Farmers Market

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside market featuring local farmers, producers, artists and crafters. Riverfront Park, Historic Downtown Wilmington. Info: www.wilmington-farmers.com.

Saturday Walking Tour

10 a.m. Historic Wilmington Foundation offers two ongoing tours through October 12. The Streetcar Suburbs Tour will focus on Wilmington's first two suburbs, Carolina Place and Carolina Heights, and the development of these historic neighborhoods. The Forest Hills Tour will showcase the architectural and cultural history of the neighborhood. The Streetcar Suburbs Tour will meet at the Coastal Shopping Center at 17th Street and Market Street and the Forest Hills Tour will meet at the Forest Hills Elementary School at 602 Colonial Dr. See website for a list of selected Wednesday tours. Admission: $10. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

Sunday CAM Public Tours

2 p.m. Explore the newest exhibits at Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South 17th Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.com.

Sunday Grooves in the Grove

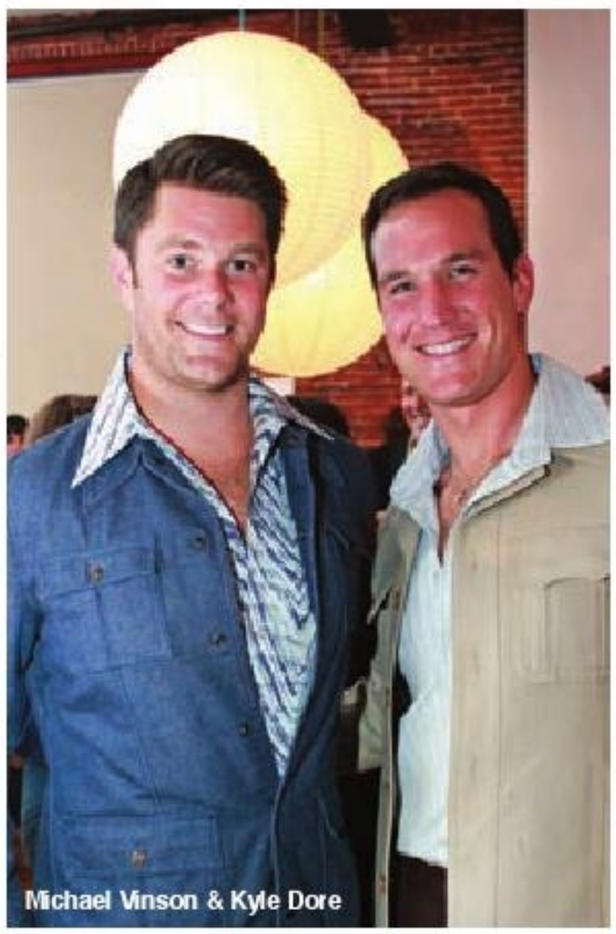
5 p.m. Fall concert series runs through October 20. Coolers and picnics welcome. Free admission. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Hwy 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

To add a calendar event, please contact Ashley at ashley@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted the first of the month, the month prior to the event.

Port City People

Blueberry Creative Re-Launch Party
Sunday, August 8, 2013
Photographs by Ariel Keener

Adam Gilbert & Austin Stinson


Michael Vinson & Kyle Dore

McKenzie Lacoss, Mary Ordog & Ting Guan

Ash McGuire, Ryan Jaccard, Cassie Hunter, James Martin

Corinne Caputo, Colin Peterson & Dave Afrika

Deirdre Zahl & Jess James

Jessica Hale, Wendy Reavis, Khalilah Olokunola, Madiana Udeozo and Lynne Jones

Kyle & Marie Polak

Emily Rodriguez & Maura Kropue

Ben Yemba, Wendy Reavis, David Pascua

Brittany Adams, Amy Mason & Kelly Marie

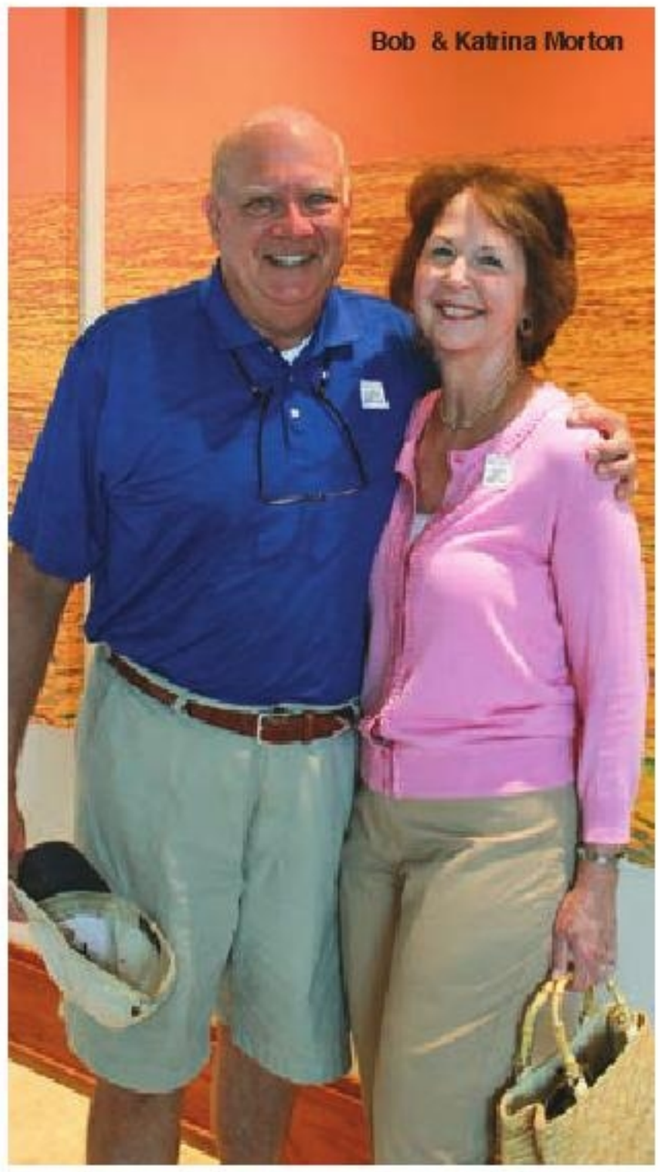
Michelle & Daniel Glauber

Port City People

Lumina Daze Celebration
Sunday, August 25, 2013
Photographs by Ariel Keener

Lori Rosbrugh, Haywood Newkirk, Susan Creasy, Sandy May

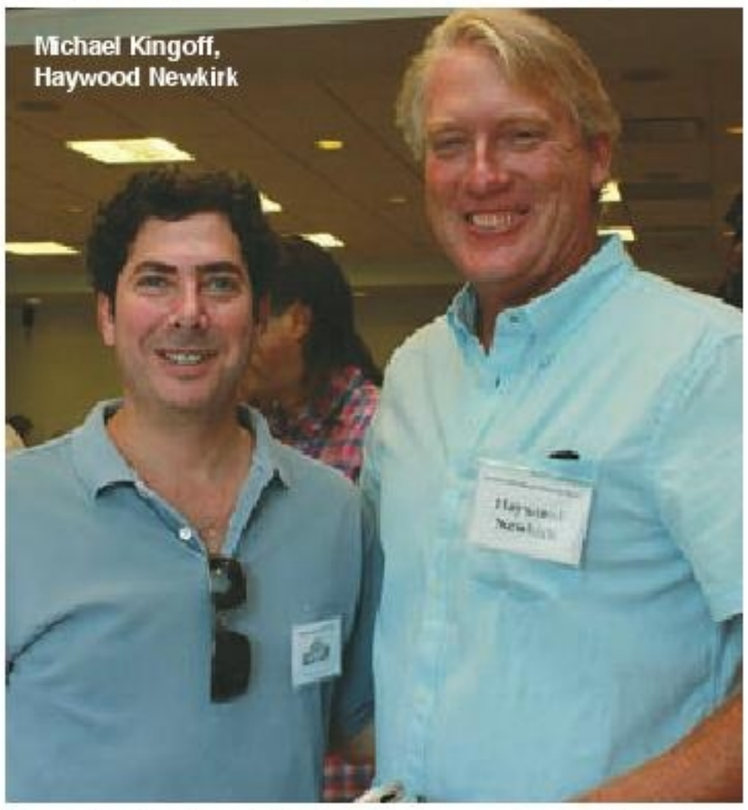
Van Marr, Diane Stirewalt, Crystal Ahumada, Paula Sturdy


Bob & Katrina Morton

Sue Copeland, Paul Butler

Gail Edmondson, Ellen Williams, Marty Coble, Beth Smith, Rose Marie Coats

Gunnar Shaw, Cindy Carroll


Michael Kingoff, Haywood Newkirk

Lena Graham, Peggy Hunt, Diane Armstrong, Patricia Wingfield

Tim, Lucas & Teri Brock

The Imitations

Frank Potter, Linwood Gainey

Lannie Kirby, Susan & John Brooks, John Ross, Ken Kirby

Port City People

Brunswick Intercultural Festival
Saturday, September 7, 2013
Photographs by Ariel Keener

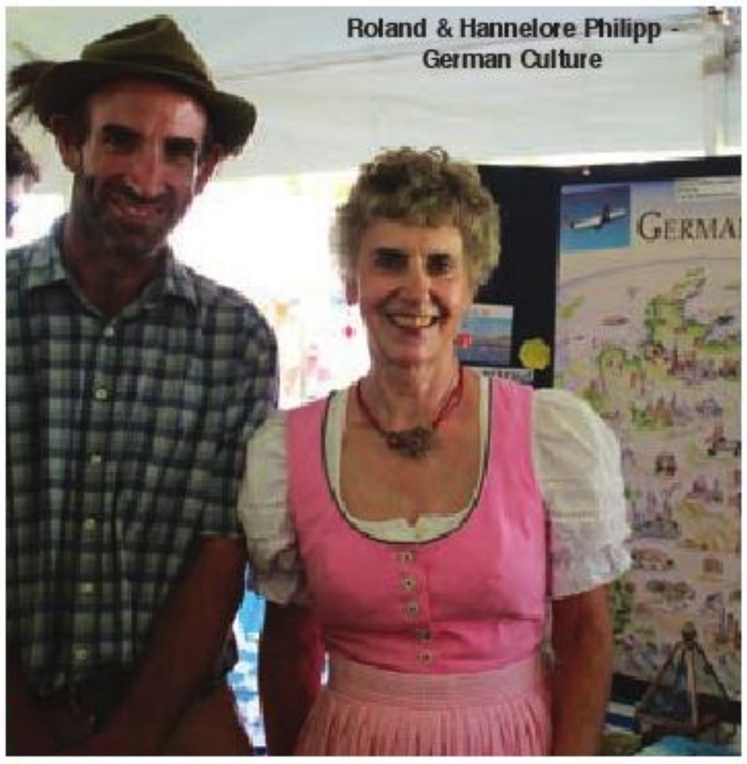
Event volunteers: Whitney Marie, Maria Aguilar, Marisa Reins, Lexus Nixon

Cultural Fashion Show - Theresa of Spain

BB&T
Cindy Dowling, Julia Nicholas, Leticia Nicholas

Mari-Lou Wong-Chong, Festival Chair & Marina Quarticelli

Marie Czerniawski - Polish Culture


Roland & Hannelore Philipp - German Culture

Nalinee Tantayopin - Thai Culture

Cultural Dancers

Kiley Martin, Max & Michelle Mena

Iris Malady, Marilyn Graham, Yvonne Pagan, Mari-Lou Wong-Chong, Jeanette Stevens

Port City People

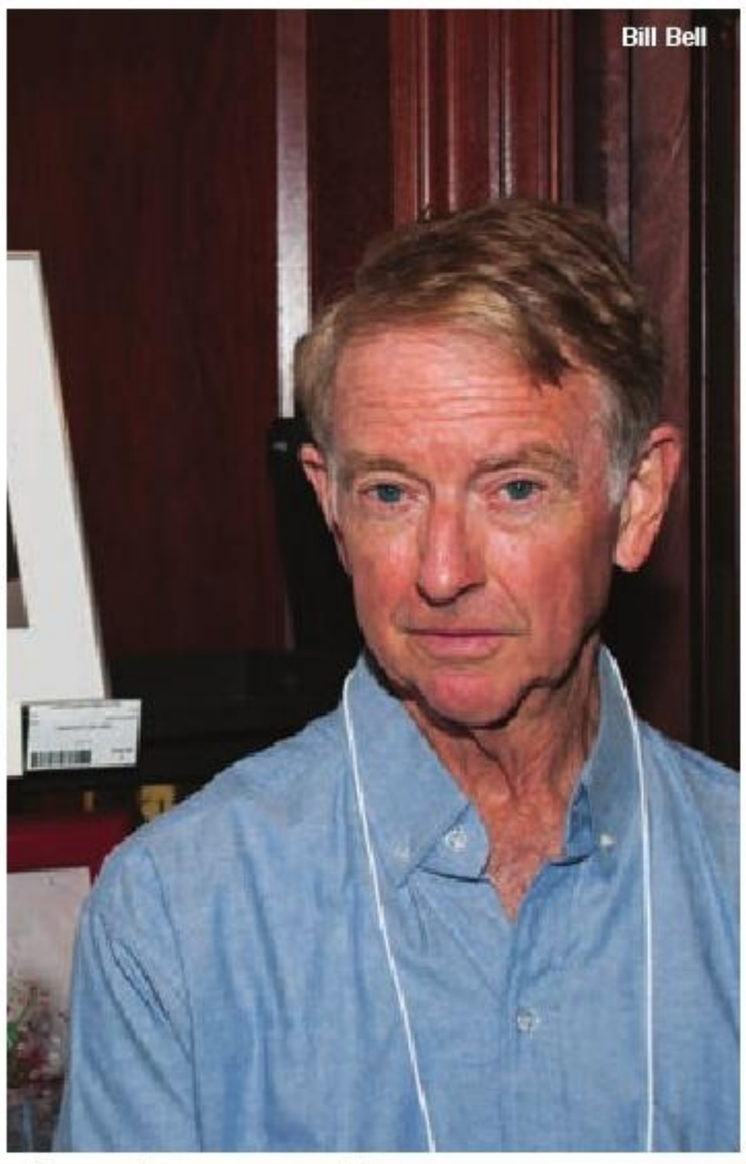
Landfall Art Show
Wednesday, August 28, 2013
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Ron Gunther, Muffy Pepper, Marilyn Gunther

Fran and Carol Drury, Ann Leister, Pat White

Katie Watkins, Monica Rolquin

Tyrrell Accattoto, Steve Burdt, Dr. Lenard Edralin


Bill Bell

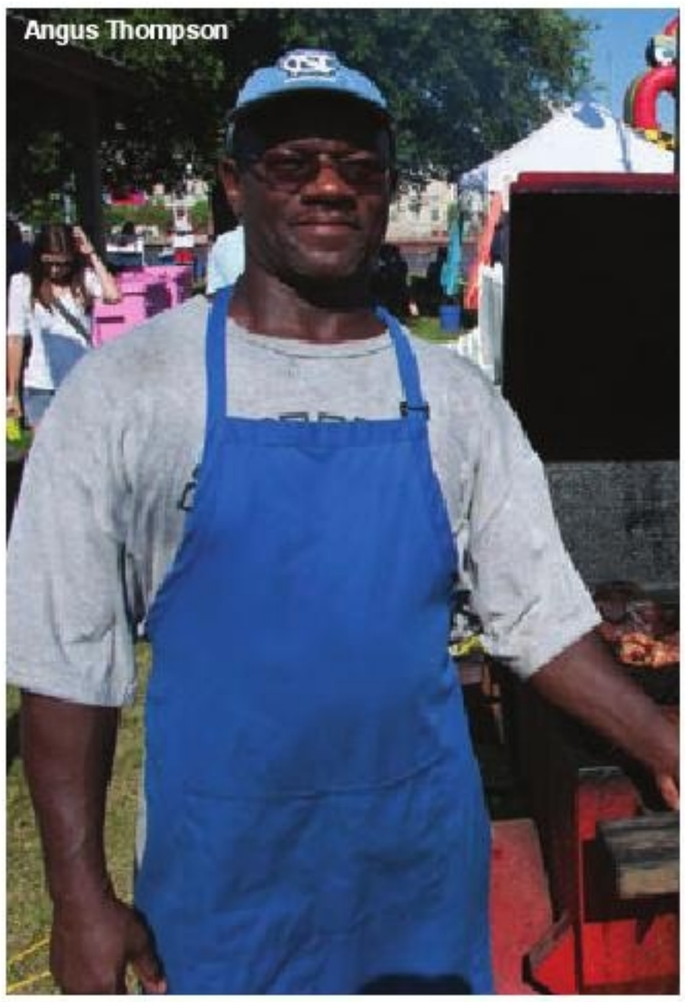
Ed Hearn

John Turpin, Chad Pearson, Pat White, Carl Roark

Katie Watkins, Jenny McKinnon Wright, Janet Burkholder

Port City People

Port City Rib Fest
August 9–11, 2013
Photographs by Bill Ritenour


Angus Thompson

Amy Thompson, Nick Accatto

Cliff & Cyndi Engle

Tamra Birchfield, Kelly Gallion

Jamie Burney, Kristen O'Neal

Texas Pit Barbeque (Winner of the Best Ribs)

Duke's Old South Barbeque (Winner of Best Sauce)

Lisa Frey, Emily Hastings, Will McKibbin

Hope Sarrate, Mary Sarrate, Rita Turner, Nick Sarrate

Port City People

Last Chance for White Pants Gala
Friday, August 30, 2013
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Brenda McDonald, Sandy Spears

Kelly and Brian Thomas

Clinton Fullam, Kasondra Hughes

Elizabeth Jackson, Wendy Reavis, Jennifer Mattis

John and Wendy McElhinney, Michelle Clark, Buddy Green

AJ and Courtney Aliah

Molly Jones, Laurel Hiller

Laurie Taylor, Jill Raspet, Marilyn McConell

Ashley Miller, Melisa Gallison, Beth Quinn

Continued from page 80

was a bar/grill/grocery/service station. Uncle Bob commanded the store, cooking in the grill kitchen, drinking beer with bar people, sending me out front to tend the gas pumps — sometimes he'd follow me out and tell a Florida tourist that I was from "up north" in North Carolina and then he'd brag about me — a definite no-no with my parents.

Uncle Bob died in 1989, and Aunt Berdena a few years later. They had a bunch of nieces and nephews and Uncle Bob wrote this to me in a letter late in his life: "Of all the offsprings, you was my favorite."

I've been looking for anything — any clue — about "Martin's Corner" on the Internet for ten years or so. In the past three or four, I've traveled up and down highway 301 on Google satellite and on Google Earth, straining my eyes for some hint of the intersection where the store stood — could it still be there? — and across the side street for a house that resembled the beautiful bungalow home. No luck.

A few years ago I stumbled onto an odd reference. "Martin's Corner" sent me to eBay and a rare postcard labeled "Martin's Corner" — for sale. I zeroed in on the photo, almost breathless with excitement. There it was! The store and house! I could see a portion of the low stucco wall with low brick columns surrounding the home. I remembered playing on that wall.

There were two photos on the postcard, one above the other. In the upper one was both the store and the home, and in the lower was the inside of Martin's Corner restaurant/grill and behind the counter stood Aunt Berdena, a helper, and Uncle Bob. Overjoyed, I bid seven bucks for the postcard, and got it. The address on the card "U.S. Hwy 301 & 200" didn't help, since 301 and 200 are the same road.

I guess I can best explain the mystery of the place, the love I had for it like this: It was a place that — while the rest of your world talked — sang.

Just yesterday, I found on a long-lost photo an address: "3106 Jax Rd." I went to my computer and, full of hope, typed in "3106 Jacksonville Road, Ocala, Florida" on the Google Earth site. Immediately I was was confronted with a wall and a shed behind it. My heart fell. But I should look around, I thought. I did a ninety degree turn with the Google Earth arrow, saw a major intersection, moved to it, looked right — yes, that could . . . could very well be the store, now changed practically beyond recognition. A 180 degree turn would confront me with the house across street — Uncle Bob's and Aunt Berdena's homeplace. I turned. A building stood there that could have once been a home and . . . it was hard to tell if — and then I saw it: a portion of that stucco wall that I used to play on, exactly as I remembered it. The hair on my arms stood.

Nothing but the wall looked familiar. But then I saw the home chimney in the right place, and as I investigated the intersection from my boyhood I became so sad, I almost cried. It was so . . . so different. The home was a used car lot office. The whole intersection seemed junky, foreign, strange. I studied it, angle after angle.

But within a few minutes two thoughts came:

First, the place as it used to be when I loved it could never be taken from me. And second, somewhere in the United States there might be some kid with a renegade, storytelling uncle or aunt who owns and runs a store at that intersection. Today. And that kid's parents may be strict and conventional, and the intersection, an intersection he or she will search for in fifty years, could be, for the kid, heaven.

Clyde Edgerton is the author of ten novels, a memoir, and a new work, Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers. *He teaches in the creative writing department at UNCW.*

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Don't miss these author events
just up the road
TUESDAY OCTOBER 15 AT 5 PM
John A. Blackburn
HEALTHY STABLES BY DESIGN:
A COMMON SENSE APPROACH TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF HORSES
FRIDAY OCTOBER 18 AT 5:30 PM
Carrie Morey
CALLIE'S BISCUITS AND SOUTHERN TRADITIONS:
HEIRLOOM RECIPES FROM OUR FAMILY KITCHEN
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 5 AT 5 PM
Jill McCorkle
LIFE AFTER LIFE
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 7 AT 4:30 PM
Richard J. Moss
THE KINGDOM OF GOLF IN AMERICA
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 10 AT 2:30 PM
DeLene Beeland
THE SECRET WORLD OF RED WOLVES
The Country Bookshop
140 Northwest Broad Street, Southern Pines, NC | 910.692.3211 | www.thecountrybookshop.biz

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New Love, Old Story

By Astrid Stellanova

The stars finally aligned for me in the love department, Sweet Things. His name is a mouthful: Augustus Beauregard Shackleford III. Bowling buddies call him Gus, but to me he's Beau. He's still got most of his red hair, his own teeth and freckles. He used to have good eyesight, but he ain't now, 'cause he thinks yours truly looks this good without trying. Anyhow, we met up on Facebook when I posted this want ad for a telepath:

"You know where to apply."

Best of all is Gus can't sneak off without getting caught, 'cause of them flashing rims on his Eldorado. All Miss Astrid can say about Beau and his ride is, "Yum, yum, eat em up!"

Libra (September 23-October 22)
It has been a trying time, and you have been sorely tested at work. Your main coping strategy has been to self-medicate. A six-pack is not a strategy. Listen here, when we had to cremate Great Grandpa Hornblower, bless his heart, he had drunk so much Blatz he burned for two days. There's a resolution coming you just couldn't have guessed, so hang onto your boxer shorts and deal. You are coming into your own and your due, at last! Before you've blown the candles out on the birthday cake, you'll have a big old smile on your face that won't quit till Christmas. The best days to have your cake and eat it too: the 11th, 19th and 29th.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)
OK, Beau says if you drive like a bat outta hell, you bound to get there. And he oughta know. Your perpetual bad mood is about to lift. There's a check coming you didn't expect. Time to finally take them skydiving lessons you always dreamed about. There's a change-of-life lesson coming your way which involves a tank of gas and an itch to hit the open road. Do it. Or at least, back out of the driveway and go around the block and live a little, Darlin'. A confluence on the 12th is in your favor but use your side mirrors, Rambo.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)
You got blinders on when it comes to recognizing your best traits. You're entitled to more than you ask for, Honey Bun, and you are loyal to a fault. My brother was a good-looking Sagittarius, and when he got called up during 'Nam, he had a girlfriend so scary looking he couldn't take her to a dog fight for fear she would win it. But he stuck by her. She, on the other hand, sent him a Dear John before he ever shipped outta Camp Lejeune. When you experience a major upheaval early this month, it will lead to eventually re-thinking a lot of your life plans. By the 16th, things are going to look Windex-clear.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)
If your lifetime goal is to own a complete set of Pez dispensers, then you have already achieved something. On the other hand, time is a-wasting if you meant to have children or get a medical degree. Did you ever look up the word "procrastinator"? A planetary alignment around the 20th will mean it is time to get off the porch and run with the big dogs. If *Antiques Roadshow* comes to town, just sell them dispenser toys, honey, and get your money back so you can go to Phoenix University. And go ahead and become a computer geek, or a mammogram technician like you always dreamed. Late month will make that, and other things, a possibility.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18)
The thing is, you've been frustrated and broke lately. Get in line, Sugar. If you gotta borrow money, my mama always told me to make sure to get a loan from a pessimist, 'cause they don't expect it back anyhow. Your financial fortunes will change, thanks to an interplanetary shift on the 7th that will have your pockets full and your mind empty. (Or vice versa. I get confused sometimes.) Mama also said money can't buy happiness. But, even you spiritual types know scratch is kinda like a Fudgsicle or a stick of gum: They sure can make misery a lot easier to handle. After the first of the month, all is settled.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)
This month, you're kinda like a hooker winning the lottery. Between your sex drive and your sense of humor, you've got something to share with near about everybody. By the 15th, you meet someone who will be a big influence on your future. Around the middle of the month, you find either a Mr. Right Now or Mr. Right All the Time. Take it from Miss Astrid, Facebook is a good place to troll. (What did we do with our days before Facebook? Bale wheat? Hoe cotton? Chew gum and cuss? Honey, the day I met Beau I spent about fourteen straight hours on FB in a kinda like blur.)

Aries (March 21-April 19)
Beau said things didn't work out with his first wife because he's an Aries and she was a — well, it ain't actually an astrological sign or a nice word, but it rhymes with *itch*. But when she left him he was so miserable without her, it was about as bad as when she was still there. Honey, this is October, when you figure out that you are never too old to learn something really and truly stupid. With a convergence in your sign this month, you have a chance to learn from your past. But I've got a Chinese fortune cookie that says, "Nostalgia ain't what it used to be." Take a reality check mid-month, and enjoy the 22nd through the 25th.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)
You're just like my AA sponsor, who claims they used to drink just to make other people interesting. It's going to get more interesting, trust me. The 3rd through the 7th are pretty crazy-making. When an old love shows up this month, buy the negatives no matter what she asks for them. Just saying you got some long-buried things in your past erupting now, and you gotta deal with them. You got a rocky road the first half of the month, then you find resolution if you can do this one thing: Just. Shut. Up. Especially on the 28th and the 29th. My mama says a wise man covers his ass, but a wiser one keeps his pants on — does that ring true for you, Raging Bull?

Gemini (May 21-June 20)
The Twin has got some complicating factors coming into play. Feel confused? Hey, this is Be Nice to Somebody Month. Try it. By the 25th, you get big news from somebody who is important. At least to you. If you thought things were going better, you musta overlooked something, Sugar. Astrologically, you got some fence-mending to do. Before a planetary shift resolves next month, you might want to say "Sorry." Heck fire, say it twice because at the first and last of the month, you will step on some toes. Again.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)
The truth for you, Crab Cakes, is just like Beau's bumper sticker: "Don't Follow Me, I'm Lost." (Or is it the other one: "Warning: in the Event of the Rapture, This Vehicle Will Become Unmanned"?) Anyhow, you might be on the right road, but until the 9th you got no clue where you're headed or what county you're in. Ever think about surrendering your license? Until a planetary flux resolves, you might as well just lie low. My fortune cookie says, "He who stands on toilet is high on pot." No matter how high you feel by the end of the month, don't take on too much.

Leo (July 23-August 22)
Trying to control a Leo is like betting you can quit gambling. Honey Child, you still think that making mistakes is fine if somebody else is willing to learn from them. This month, you have an astrological hiccup in your star sign on the 15th that is going to make you question your own sanity. Which is possibly going to make you a better human being when it all really goes down. When you realize that honesty is good but insanity is the best defense, it could be useful to share your past with your public defender. Otherwise, count your lucky stars till the 22nd.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)
This is a perfect time to get back in shape after all that birthday cake, Sweet Thing. I know, round is a shape, but that ain't what I meant. Your stars point to this being a good time to firm up. Your mind could use a little work in that department too. Midmonth is a good time to restrain some of them urges you got. It's bad luck to be superstitious, but I think you should take this horoscope with you to Weight Watchers. Maybe they'll give you a discount, or a bumper sticker. Tell 'em at WW that Miss Astrid sent you, and I promise to weigh in next month.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.

The Renegade Who Loved Me

Uncle Bob and the place that sang

ILLUSTRATION BY HARRY BLAIR

By Clyde Edgerton

Just after my Uncle Bob escaped from a chain gang in 1918, he changed his name from Robert Ridley Warren to Walter Clarence ("W.C.") Martin and started a new life working in a carnival. After years with the carnival (rigging concession games with hidden strings, and running an after-hours gambling tent) he drove bootlegged liquor up and down the East Coast in his tractor-trailer combo. His cover was a vegetable and fruit hauling business. Finally, in 1944, he went legitimate and settled down and married my Aunt Berdena (his fourth marriage).

My mother, Uncle Bob's sister, and my father were teetotalers and church goers. They were strict parents and quite conventional.

Uncle Bob was, as you have guessed, anything but.

A renegade who loved me, he looked me in the eye, patted me on the back, cursed, taught me about dogs, how to tie knots, shoot a shotgun, and cast an open-faced fishing reel. He told stories (oh, what a storyteller he was) about places and people and situations I could not have fathomed — his Uncle Alfred who talked with a lisp and had ten children, his asking a woman to hide a metal file beside a certain telephone pole back when he was on the chain gang.

He owned a small wooden fishing boat with a motor, a hunting jeep and bird dogs. We poached regularly. When he taught me something, his voice and the eye sparkle told me I wasn't a child, but his younger buddy. He was the most romantic person (as in mysterious and laden with marvelous true stories) I ever knew and I, being an only child, did not have to share him with a brother or sister.

His first, last, and only legitimate venture was Martin's Corner, a trailer park just north of Ocala, Florida. He ran it from 1944, the year I was born, until the mid-sixties. I visited about once a year until Uncle Bob and Aunt Berdena retired, moved away, and Martin's Corner — my heaven on Earth — was no more.

I've not returned to the site of Martin's Corner in over fifty years, but the place, in significant detail, remains in my mind's eye. The main building

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UP A NOTCH

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